

## Introduction- Standards-Aligned IEP Web Module

The purpose of this IDEA'04 updated Web Module is to provide teachers, administrators, parents and others involved in the education of students with disabilities a clear and concise understanding of the IDEA'04 regulations regarding the Individualized Education Program. This self-paced Web Module is intended to provide a thorough background and clear understanding of the relationship between accountability, standards-aligned IEPs, and standards-aligned instruction and curriculum based upon the federal No Child Left Behind Act and the IDEA'04 law. Based on this foundation, the participant will become familiar with:

- The Alignment of IEPs with State Standards and Accountability Systems
- The Educational Benefit Process
- The Principles of Assessment and Accountability
- Least Restrictive Environment: Access and Progress in the General Education Curriculum
- Standards-Aligned IEPs
- Writing Measurable Goals Related to California Content Standards

This Web module is intended to provide the practitioner with a practical tool to obtain the background knowledge to write and implement a standards aligned Individual Education Plan. The module will direct the learner through the clarification of the law, providing a clearer understanding of the purpose of the law to provide educational benefit to the student through the standards-aligned IEP. Further explanation is provided on how to implement this instruction in the Least Restrictive environment to ensure that the standards-aligned goals are met and that the student has access to and makes progress in the general education curriculum.

This module is written for both teachers of students who are working toward a high school diploma, and for teachers of students who may be working toward a certificate of completion. The focus and intent of this document is to provide teachers with a clear pathway and step-by step approach to writing IEP goals with a clear point of focus on the California Content Standards and application strategies that will allow the student to meet the challenge of making progress in the general education curriculum.

This Web module is intended to provide professional development for teachers who choose to independently improve their knowledge of the standards-based IEP process. This training also lends itself to university courses that focus on special education law, standards and accountability, assessment for the IEP process and practical implementation of a standards-aligned IEPs. University instructors may use this module to meet field work, or independent study requirements for teachers both in the Level I and Level II Education Specialist Credential programs, alternate credential programs and general education programs focused on inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms. This web module provides an informative tool for general

education teachers who will have students with disabilities and standards-aligned IEPs in their general education classrooms.

The design of this module is that in each section, the participant will have the opportunity to read the relevant information related to each topic. Within each section, the reader will find the IDEA'04 citations as well as the Code of Federal Regulations related to each topic. In addition, each section clarifies the meaning and purpose of the law and provides specific examples of its implementation.

At the end of each section, the participant will complete a review in which they answer questions related to the topic. University instructors may choose to have students turn these "Review" sections in to receive credit for completing the module or for obtaining the field work hours for the time spent completing each section of the module. Typically it would take most learners approximately \_\_\_\_ hours to complete all 6 of the reading and review sections of this module.

Through this IDEA'04 updated Web module, It is the California Department of Education's intent to provide practioners with a tool that they can use to improve their own skills and knowledge in the area of writing standards-aligned IEPs, and to ultimately improve outcomes for students with disabilities through the use and implementation of standards-aligned IEPs and standards-aligned instruction.

## **Outcomes of this training**

Participants will understand:

- How NCLB and IDEA'04 intersect and impact the IEP and special education services for students with disabilities
- The connection between state standards and accountability practices
- The connection between content standards and the individualized education plan
- The educational benefit process
- California assessment practices including accommodations and alternate assessments
- Assessment practices that support standards-aligned instruction
- How the students' access and progress in the general education curriculum is obtained through the LRE
- How to write specific standards aligned IEP goals for students with disabilities including ELL students and students with significant cognitive disabilities

## The Educational Benefit Process

### Lesson Two Reading

By the end of this lesson, participants will have knowledge of:

1. The Rowley Supreme Court Decision that defined Educational Benefit of the IEP.
2. How Educational Benefit is defined.
3. The process or steps involved in an Educational Benefit Review.
4. How Educational Benefit is measured in the review process.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

HENDRICK HUDSON DIST. BD. OF ED. V. ROWLEY, 458 U.S. 176 (1982)

458 U.S. 176

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE HENDRICK HUDSON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, WESTCHESTER COUNTY, ET AL. V. ROWLEY, BY HER PARENTS, ROWLEY ET UX. CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS OF THE SECOND CIRCUIT  
NO. 80-1002

Argued March 23, 1982

Decided June 28, 1982

“... Implicit in the congressional purpose of providing access to a ‘free appropriate public education’ is the requirement that the education to which access is provided be sufficient to confer some educational benefit upon the handicapped child. It would do little good for Congress to spend millions of dollars in providing access to a public education only to have the [458 U.S. 176, 201] handicapped child receive no benefit from that education. The statutory definition of ‘free appropriate public education,’ in addition to requiring that States provide each child with ‘specially designed instruction,’ expressly requires the provision of ‘such ... supportive services ... as may be required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education.’ 1401(17) (emphasis added) We therefore conclude that the ‘basic floor of opportunity’ provided by the Act consists of access to specialized instruction and related services which are individually designed to provide educational benefit to the handicapped child. [458 U.S. 176, 202] “The determination of when handicapped children are receiving sufficient educational benefits to satisfy the requirements of the Act presents a more difficult problem. The Act requires participating States to educate a wide spectrum of handicapped children, from the marginally hearing-impaired to the profoundly retarded and palsied. It is clear that the benefits obtainable by children at one end of the spectrum will differ dramatically from those obtainable by children at the other end, with infinite variations in between. One child may have little difficulty competing successfully in an academic setting with non-handicapped children while another child may encounter great difficulty in acquiring even the most basic of self-maintenance skills. We do not attempt today to establish any one test for determining the adequacy of educational benefits conferred upon all children covered by the Act. Because in this case we are presented with a handicapped

child who is receiving substantial specialized instruction and related services, and who is performing above average in the regular classrooms of a public school system, we confine our analysis to that situation.

—from the U.S. Supreme Court

### **What is the Educational Benefit Process?**

“Within the Board of Education v. Rowley decision, the threshold used was the provision of sufficient supportive services to permit the child to benefit from the instruction. Instruction should be reasonably calculated to enable the child to achieve passing marks and advance from grade to grade.”

—from the opinion issued by Justice William H. Rehnquist

When a child has a disability that directly interferes with his or her ability to learn, instruction is specially designed to address that child’s unique needs. An educational benefit process is completed to determine if that instruction ensures the child has access to the general education curriculum so that he or she has the opportunity to meet the educational goals and standards that apply to all children.

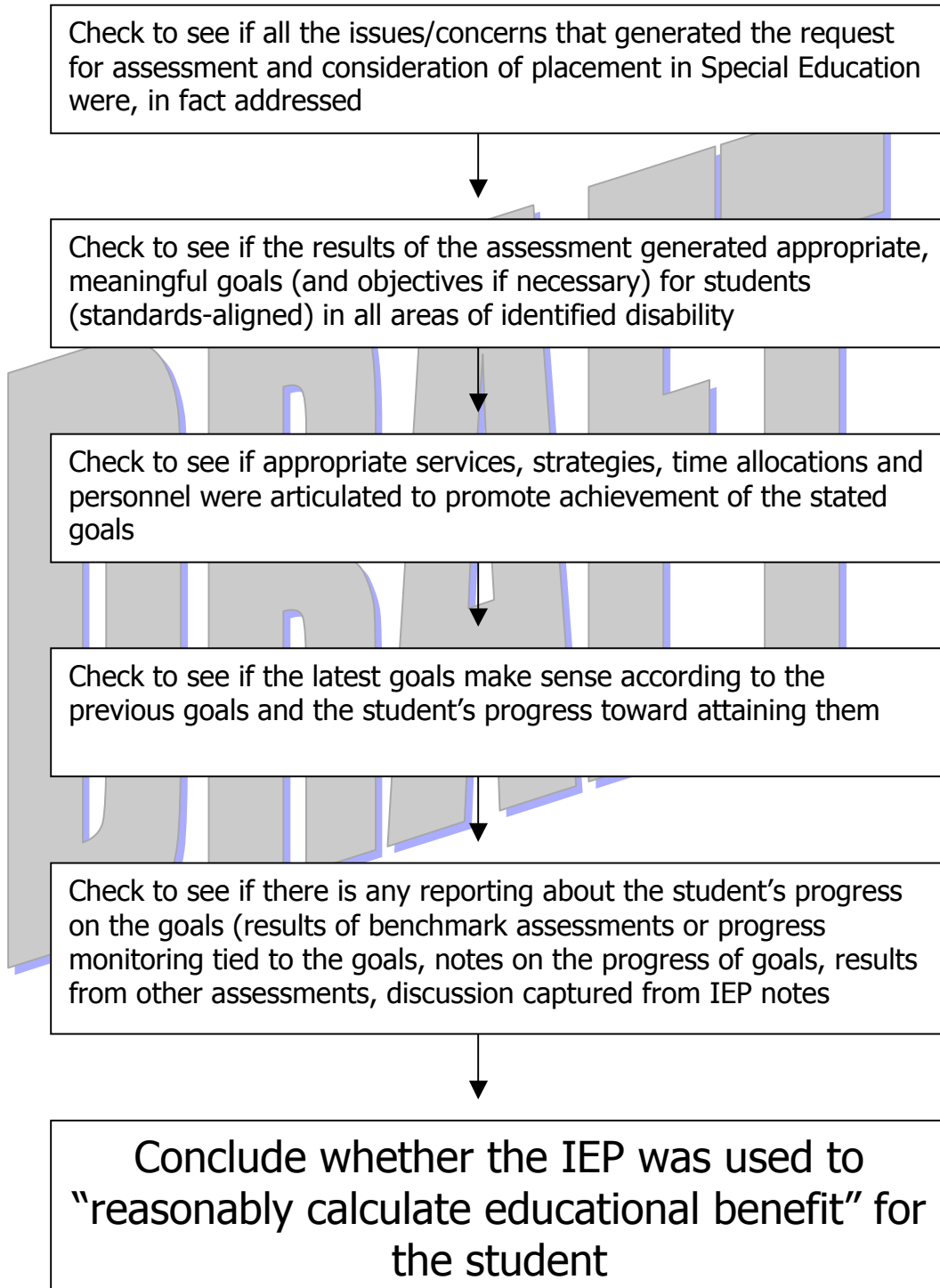
The educational benefit process helps individualized education program (IEP) teams improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The California Department of Education (CDE) uses an educational benefit process in Special Education Self-Reviews (SESR) and Verification Reviews (VR). During reviews, determinations are made as to whether students have made reasonable progress and received educational benefits.

Five questions are asked during the CDE's educational benefit process:

1. Does the district use the standard established by the Rowley case to provide services that result in educational benefit?
2. Does the district provide services that result in educational benefit, as measured by special education goals and key performance indicators?
3. Does the district comply with procedural guarantees that are known to be frequent noncompliance items in other districts?
4. Does the district fulfill its responsibilities as the district of residence when its students are served by other districts and programs?
5. Does the SELPA (special education local plan area), of which the district is a part, fulfill its responsibilities for monitoring the procedural elements of the local plan?

The following form (2.1) helps Educational Benefit review teams to walk through the review process in an organized manner. Key issues can be focused on as teams begin the process using this flow chart. As they more carefully review each child’s IEP, the form (2.2) guides the questions that teams should ask themselves as they look through each file. The use of these documents help reviewers to identify the key issues that may not have been appropriately addressed in the IEP.

# Flow Chart of the Process of an Educational Benefit Review of an IEP Folder



## Review of Records

In carefully reviewing individual student records, the following educational benefit questions are reviewed in regards to each file:

1. Is the assessment complete and does it identify the student's needs?
2. Does the present level of academic achievement include all of the areas of need, as identified in the assessment?
3. Are all of the student's educational needs addressed by appropriate goals and objectives?
4. Do the services support goals and objectives?
5. Did the student make yearly progress?
6. If the student did not make progress:
  - Were enough services provided to ensure that the student could make progress?
  - Considering the answer to each of the questions above, was the individualized education program (IEP) reasonably calculated to result in educational benefit?
  - Once the lack of progress was identified, were goals and objectives changed in the subsequent IEP to assist the student in making progress?
  - Were the services changed in the subsequent IEP to assist the student in making progress?
6. To assess for overall compliance, consider the answers to each of the above. Was the IEP reasonably calculated to result in educational benefit?

## The Review Process

The educational benefit process involves:

1. Recording information included in the student's IEP and other records
2. Analyzing a relationship between the identified needs, goals, and services
3. Comparing progress to the prior year
4. Completing the educational benefit summary form (see next page) to see if there are patterns to the program planned for the student
5. Discussing overall educational benefit—was the student's program reasonably planned to result in educational benefit?
6. Reviewing the student's progress and adjusting the student's IEP if progress is not made and/or in order to address anticipated needs

## Educational Benefit Review Questions

**Instructions: After conducting Educations Benefit Review the team should answer the following questions. If there are any issues of procedural compliance, comprehensiveness, or any other “red flags”, the team should answer the questions, “No.”**

- |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Yes                      | No                       | 1. Are the concerns, which led to the referral to Special Education linked to the results of the multi-disciplinary evaluation?                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Yes                      | No                       | 2. Are follow-up assessments linked?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Yes                      | No                       | 3. Is the assessment complete, does it identify the student’s needs, and was the student assessed in all areas of suspected disability?        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Yes                      | No                       | 4. Does the present level of performance include all of the needs identified in the assessment?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Yes                      | No                       | 5. Are all of the student’s educational needs addressed by appropriate, standards-based goals (and objectives) including pre-requisite skills? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Yes                      | No                       | 6. Are the reporting periods clearly stated with appropriate expectations noted?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Yes                      | No                       | 7. Do the services support the goals?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Yes                      | No                       | 8. Are general education/core teachers addressed in services in the IEP?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Yes                      | No                       | 9. Did the student meet short-term benchmarks/objectives if appropriate and make appropriate yearly progress                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |

**IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION #9 IS YES, MARK #10, & # 11 AS N/A**

- |                          |                          |   |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| N/A                      | Yes                      | No  | 10. If the student did not make progress, were the goals changed in in the next IEP to assist the student in making progress? |
|                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |   |
| N/A                      | Yes                      | No  | 11. If the student did not make progress, were the services changed in the next IEP to assist the student to make progress?   |
|                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |   |
| Yes                      | No                       | 12. Were enough services provided to ensure that the student would make progress?   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |   |
| Yes                      | No                       | 13. To assess overall compliance, considering the answers in each of the above, was the IEP reasonably calculated to result in educational benefit? |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |   |

## Educational Benefit Summary Form Template

Please note: The educational benefit summary form used here is the template used by the CDE's Verification Review Teams.

Assessment	Present Performance Achievement/ Function	Goals	Services	Progress	Was IEP Adusted?

—adapted from California Department of Education, Special Education Division

### Example of How to Use the Educational Benefit Process Form

#### Step 1

Chart information about needs, present performance, goals and objectives, placement/services, and progress.

#### Step 2

Analyze information to determine if needs, goals, and services are complete and result in progress.

#### Step 3

Compare first year analysis to second year analysis, and second year to third year. Determine if modifications to goals and services were made based on progress (or lack of progress).

Assessment	Present Performance Achievement/ Function	Goals	Services	Progress	Was IEP Adusted?
Woodcock-Johnson-3 R	Total Written Language 2.0 Writing Fluency 1.6 Spelling 2.4 Writing Sample 1.8	Compose a single paragraph including topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentence	Resource Specialist pull-out program (12% of day special education services)	Not Met	No

		with 80% acc. in 1 of 2 trials.			
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**Educational benefit is measured in a variety of ways including:**

- Achieving passing marks
- Advancing from grade to grade
- Making progress toward meeting goals and objectives
- Improving scores on statewide or district-wide tests and alternate assessment measures
- Graduating with a diploma
- Passing the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)

The purpose of the process is to determine if a student's program has been reasonably planned to result in educational benefit.

- Review information from the last three years concerning the student's program, the IEPs, assessments, triennial review, and progress information.
- Chart how the program was planned for each year, including assessed needs, present levels of achievement and function, goals, services, and progress.
- Analyze how the program was planned (i.e., Was the assessment comprehensive? Was there a relationship between the identified needs and the goals? Were there sufficient supportive services to assist the student in reaching each goal?)
- Compare the program in Year 1 to the program in Year 2 to determine how the team adjusted the student's program in relation to changes in the student's performance and progress.
- Compare Year 2 to Year 3.

## Educational Benefit Process

The process varies depending on the student and the school. However, the framework, demonstrated in the graphic below, must include the basic questions and observations.

### **Record Information**

What information is included in the student's IEP?

What information is available through other records?

- Present performance
- Needs
- Goals and objectives
- Services
- Progress

### **Analyze Relationships**

Is there a clear relationship between the identified needs, goals, and services?

- Relationship between needs and goals
- Relationship between services and goals

### **Compare to Prior Year**

Are subsequent goals and services consistent with progress made?

- Present performance
- Goals
- Services

### **Complete Educational Benefit Summary Form**

Are there any patterns to the program planned for the student?

- Summarize IEP contents
- Discuss trends

### **Discuss Overall Educational Benefit Question**

Was the student's program reasonably planned to result in educational benefit?

Repeat  
• Year 1  
• Year 2

—from the California Department of Education, Special Education Division

## Compliance in the Area of Educational Benefit

Compliance in the area of educational benefit means that the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team went through all the proper steps and used information that was legally compliant to plan a program that was reasonably calculated to result in educational benefit.

## Reasonable Calculation

Reasonable calculation is based on the procedural requirements of IDEA and means the assessment was complete.

1. The IEP team identified needs related to:
  - The student's disability
  - Involvement and progress in the general education curriculum
2. Goals and objectives/benchmarks were established in each need area.
3. Services were planned to support:
  - Progress toward all goals
  - Progress in the general education curriculum
  - Participation in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities
  - Education with other children with or without disabilities
4. The IEP team reviewed the student's progress and adjusted the student's IEP if progress was not made and/or in order to address anticipated needs.

## Conclusion

In providing students with disabilities a free and appropriate public education, we must ensure that they are obtaining a reasonable educational benefit from the special education services prescribed in the IEP. The Educational Benefit Review Process is a systematic procedure to look at the long-term effects of the specially designed instruction and Individualized Education Program deemed appropriate by the IEP team. This process is intended to help schools and local education educational agencies to assess the effectiveness of their programs and services to determine if the child has made reasonable progress, has had access to the general education curriculum and has had the opportunity to meet the educational goals and standards that apply to all children.

## Lesson Two Review- Educational Benefit Review

1. What is the purpose of the Educational Benefit Review process?

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Answer:

The purpose of the Educational Benefit Review process is to determine if the instruction prescribed in the IEP ensures the child has access to the general education curriculum so that he or she has the opportunity to meet the educational goals and standards that apply to all children.

1. In reviewing individual student records, the following questions should be reviewed:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

7. Was the assessment complete and does it identify the student's needs?
8. Does the present level of academic achievement include all of the areas of need, as identified in the assessment?
9. Are all of the student's educational needs addressed by appropriate goals and objectives?
10. Do the services support goals and objectives?
11. Did the student make yearly progress?
12. If the student did not make progress:
  - Were enough services provided?
  - Was the IEP reasonable calculated?
  - Once the lack of progress was identified, were goals and/or objectives changed?

- Were services changed in subsequent IEPs?

13. To assess for overall compliance, consider the answers to each of the above. Was the IEP reasonably calculated to result in educational benefit?

3. The Educational Benefit Review Process involves:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

The educational benefit process involves:

- Recording information included in the student's IEP and other records
- Analyzing a relationship between the identified needs, goals, and services
- Comparing progress to the prior year
- Completing the educational benefit summary form to see if there are patterns to the program planned for the student
- Discussing overall educational benefit—was the student's program reasonably planned to result in educational benefit?
- Reviewing the student's progress and adjusting the student's IEP if progress is not made and/or in order to address anticipated needs

4. Educational Benefit is measured in the following ways:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer: Educational benefit is measured in a variety of ways including:

- Achieving passing marks
- Advancing from grade to grade
- Making progress toward meeting goals and objectives
- Improving scores on statewide or district-wide tests and alternate assessment measures
- Graduating with a diploma
- Passing the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)

## The Principles of Assessment and Accountability

### Lesson Three Reading

By the end of this lesson, participants will have knowledge of:

5. The affects of Assessment and Accountability on Special Education.
6. Different types of assessments utilized to measure student progress.
7. The assessments in the California Standards and Reporting System (STAR)
8. Annual Yearly Progress targets up to 2014 in English Language Arts and Math.
9. How IDEA'04 requirements influence IEP assessment decisions.
10. Statewide assessment terminology in regards to variation, accommodations and modifications.
11. How IEP teams determine which students should take the CAPA.

**Assessment** has a very high priority in public education today. It is the barometer used to measure educational success for academic achievement for individuals, schools, districts and States. It is the accountability requirements of NCLB that have changed the face of public education today. Margaret Spellings, U. S. Secretary of Education so aptly supports this philosophy in her timely statement, “**What gets measured gets done.**” The over-riding principle is that assessment drives accountability: when assessments are required, academic instruction will improve to meet the accountability criteria.

**Accountability** is defined as the use of assessment results and other data to ensure that schools are moving in desired directions. Common elements of accountability include standards, indicators of progress toward meeting standards, analysis of data, reporting procedures, and rewards and sanctions. The “Age of Accountability” has dawned due to the federal requirements of NCLB. The federal accountability system uses assessment results and other data to outline the goals and expectations for students, teachers, schools, districts and states to demonstrate the established components or requirements of this federally mandated accountability. The “desired direction” created by the law is that states develop content standards; create assessments to measure these standards. The core of this move toward accountability is the annual measurement of progress toward proficiency of each state defined as: AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress). NCLB legislation requires that schools, districts, and states demonstrate, based student test scores, that they are making Adequate Yearly Progress.

For special educators, assessment is not an unfamiliar process. Standardized assessment at the individual level on norm-referenced tests has been part of the IEP process for the last several decades. Students with disabilities, although they did not participate in statewide-standardized assessments, did participate in individualized standardized assessments on a yearly basis for the annual IEP

review. Special educators are very familiar with the assessment process and the purposes of assessment. It is only since the passage of NCLB that all teachers now understand the purpose of assessment and the data that these assessments produce.

Assessment as defined by Elliot and Thurlow (2006, p. 77), is the process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions about individuals, groups, or systems. This process of collecting information relies upon a number of instruments, one of which may be a test. Therefore, assessment is a more comprehensive term than *test*. (CCSSO, 2003, p.4)

## Purposes of Assessment

There are several purposes of assessment. As special educators the word “assessment” in the past has meant a battery of tests as part of a diagnostic evaluation. Although this diagnostic facet of assessment is still an integral component of the special education process, especially in the area of identification of disability, assessment has many different purposes today including:

- ❑ Federal Accountability
- ❑ State Accountability
- ❑ District Accountability
- ❑ School Accountability
- ❑ Program/Instructional Accountability
- ❑ Individual Student Accountability

Each of these accountability processes utilizes different types of assessments to meet the specific purposes of each accountability measure. Standards-aligned criterion reference tests are primarily used to meet the Federal, State, District and School accountability measures. Benchmark and Formative Assessments based on state or district content standards meet school and program/instructional accountability. A number of different assessment measures are utilized to determine specific student accountability measures including a combination of standardized assessments, benchmark assessments, curriculum-based measures, and performance assessments.

## Types of Assessments

### Criterion Referenced tests (CRT)

Criterion-referenced tests are measures used to examine student performance relative to state or district criteria on standards. Instead of comparing students' scores to a national normative standard, scores are interpreted in terms of various performance standards- usually set at the district or state level. (Elliot, J., & Thurlow, M., 2006) The California performance levels on the California Standards Test are: far below basic, below basic, basic, proficient and advanced. In this type of assessment, student performance is compared to a criterion that is

reached based on cut scores determined for each of these performance areas are each grade level.

### **Norm-Referenced Test (NRT)**

Norm-referenced tests provide a comparison of individual performance to that of a state or national comparison (standardization) sample. An NRT measures the performance of a student against the performance of other individuals. Use of the norm sample enables raw scores to be converted to grade-equivalent scores, percentile scores, and standard scores. (Elliot, J., & Thurlow, M., 2006)

### **Standards-Based Assessment**

Standards-based assessments consist of an assessment instrument or battery, or system that has been constructed to measure the achievement of individual students or student populations in attaining certain standards which have been established by the local district or state educational agency. Current state-level standards-based assessment programs measure student performance against articulated standards in core academic content areas. (Elliot, J., & Thurlow, M., 2006)

### **Benchmark Assessment**

Benchmark assessments are a means of assessing student's progress toward reaching success on prescribed standards. In a larger scale, district benchmark assessments provide information on progress toward meeting those specific standards. The purpose of benchmark assessments is to determine progress toward meeting the specific standards prescribed by the district or state in order to adjust instruction to meet the standard. For individual students, benchmark assessments reveal the student's progress toward meeting their specific instructional goals, allowing teachers to adjust teaching to ensure that the student meets the goals.

### **Alternate Assessment**

An alternate assessment is an instrument used in gathering information on the standards-based performance and progress of students whose disabilities preclude their valid and reliable participation in general assessments. Alternate assessments measure the performance of a relatively small population of students who are unable to participate in the general assessment system, with or without accommodations as determined by the IEP team. (CCSSO, September, 2003)

### **Performance Assessments**

Performance assessment is a form of testing that requires the creation of an answer or project, rather than the selection of an answer- such as in a multiple-choice test. In many cases, such assessments are intended to represent or simulate real-life situations that require problem solving. (Elliot, J., & Thurlow, M., 2006)

## **Portfolio Assessment**

Portfolio assessment is a collection of student-generated or student focused projects that provide the basis for judging student accomplishment. In school settings, portfolios might contain extended projects drafts of student work, teacher comments and evaluation, assessment results and self-evaluations. The products typically depict the range of skills of the student or reveal the improvement in a student's skill level over time. (Elliot, J., & Thurlow, M., 2006)

## **Curriculum-based Assessments**

Curriculum-based assessments are assessments that mirror instructional materials and procedures related to the curriculum resulting in an ongoing process of monitoring progress in the curriculum and guiding adjustments in instruction, accommodations or modifications provided to the student. (CCSSO, September, 2003)

## **Formative Assessments**

Formative assessments are measure of student achievement used to identify the academic needs of students and to inform the instruction that they receive. Students assessed formatively receive direct assistance in a timely way based on the needs identified by the assessment. (Anderson, R., December, 2006)

## **Progress Monitoring**

Progress Monitoring involves individual or class-wide or school-wide assessment that is used to demonstrate student/class rate of improvement in curriculum and to identify whose growth is inadequate. Progress monitoring aids teachers in determining when instructional modifications may be necessary. This type of assessment can be used to sample skills in the year-long curriculum or monitor progress on a specific skill. The schedule of assessment may vary depending on the perceived need and can occur as frequently as twice weekly to once monthly. (Stecker, P.M., & Hintze, J.M, July 2006)

These processes, progress monitoring and benchmark assessments have been a part of the IEP process since the reauthorization of IDEA in 1997 when updating of the IEP goals and objectives was required. This drove the need to frequently monitor progress on the student's attainment of the goals. With the current shift in focus to accountability and early intervening services in general education; the practice of progress monitoring has now become a term familiar to general educators as well.

## **Standardized Assessments for Students with Disabilities**

Assessments are necessary to measure progress toward meeting standards and goals. Assessments are used to determine a student's present levels of

performance for IEP decision in the planning and implementing of appropriate goals. Since IDEA requires **all** children with disabilities to be included in **all** state and district assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations or alternate assessments when necessary [34 CFR § 300.320(6)(i)(ii)(A)(B)], it is important to have a clear understanding of test construction, administration, and interpretation in regards to students with special needs.

In the past, because special education students took individualized norm-referenced assessments annually as part of the IEP process, they were not included in the statewide and district wide assessment system. This often led to a different, lower standard of expectation for these students. Due to NCLB, and the focus on **all** students reaching grade level standards, special education practices have changed. Since this law requires that all (at minimum 95%) of the total population, be assessed, special education students can no longer be exempt as part of an IEP team decision.

### **The California Standardized Assessment System**

To meet the No Child Left Behind requirements, California uses the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) system, as the state's standards-based assessment system. This system includes the following assessments:

**CAT/6:** California Achievement Test, 6th Edition Survey

**CST:** California Standards Test

**Aprenda 3:** Aprenda, La prueba de logros en español, Tercera edición

**CAPA:** California Alternate Performance Assessment

(**CMA:** California Modified Achievement Test is currently being developed. This assessment is intended for students with persistent disabilities who have the ability to achieve grade level standards and graduate from high school. )

(For a chart of all tests in STAR is available at:

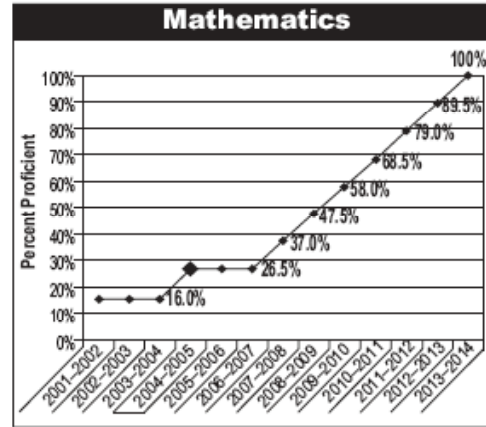
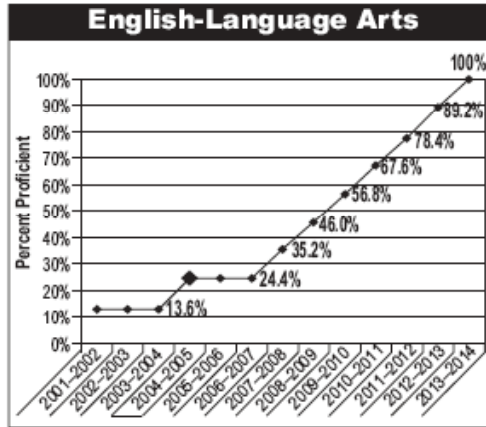
[www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/caassessment.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/caassessment.asp).)

Results from these assessments indicate proficiency levels, as defined by NCLB. Each state has developed a trajectory of proficiency to meet the goal of 100% proficiency by 2014 as prescribed by NCLB for English Language Arts (ELA) and Math for the general population and the subgroups, which includes Students with Disabilities (SWD).

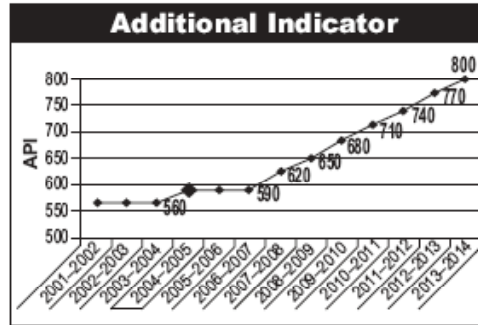
## AYP Targets, 2002–2014

### Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, and Elementary School Districts

- Participation Rate – 95% (schoolwide/districtwide and subgroups)
- Percent Proficient – Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) (schoolwide/districtwide and subgroups)<sup>1</sup>



- Additional Indicator – Growth in the API of at least one point OR a minimum API score (schoolwide/districtwide)



<sup>1</sup> AMO targets are level at two time intervals between 2002 and 2007 and then increase yearly to 2014. This pattern was established to reflect the expectation that the strongest academic gains in schools and LEAs are likely to occur in later years (after alignment of instruction with state content standards, after schools and LEAs have the opportunity for increased capacity, and after a highly qualified teacher is in every classroom).

The target for proficiency continues to increase over time, with schools being held accountable to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in each area. This chart does not allow for lowered expectations for students with disabilities or other subgroups. The initiative has created a sense of urgency and a drive to educational reform that has made a tremendous difference in special education practices over the last 10 years. The need for standards aligned IEPs resulting in standards-aligned instruction has been a direct result of these requirements.

For more information on the No Child Left Behind requirements including Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) and other information on the AYP requirements visit: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nclb/>.

Visit [www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/index.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/index.asp) to find more information on the state accountability measure, the Academic Performance Index (API). This measure is a part of the California's Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999. It measures the academic performance and growth of schools on a variety of academic measures, but does not disaggregate the results of students with disabilities as a subgroup.

## **Making Sense of the Assessment Process for Students with IEPs**

Initially including students with disabilities in state wide standardized assessments has been a difficult idea to embrace. At first out-of-level tests or partial tests were given, but these did not produce any valid data. The results of these assessments did not carry much meaning for parents or teachers for use in instructional or IEP decisions. Teachers continued to rely on individualized standardized assessments for the data needed for IEP decisions.

With the current practices of utilizing curriculum based measures, formative assessments, and frequent progress monitoring, and a clearer understanding of state standards and assessments, there is no longer a need for individualized standardized testing each year. Progress should be easily evidenced by the assessment practices mentioned above. To support standards-aligned instruction, the California Standards Tests (CST) clearly informs the public which standards will be assessed each year, and sample CST test questions are released. Teachers are encouraged to visit the [California Department of Education website](#) to become familiar with the sample test questions.

The California Statewide IEP Task Force Report in its recommendations regarding student assessment and the IEP recognized the focus on California standards and progress in the general education curriculum.

1. The student's strengths serve as the foundation of the IEP, balanced by considerations of access and progress in the general education curriculum and factors related to the student's disability.
2. The IEP must be based on state content standards and connected to

statewide assessment and accountability.

3. Multiple assessment sources must determine how a student learns and what supports are needed to succeed (e.g., knowledge, skills, academic strengths).

—from the Statewide IEP Task Force Meeting Recommendations, California Department of Education, October 4, 2003

### ***Assessment Results: Information for Instructional Planning***

Standards-aligned IEPs provide students the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to succeed in the general education curriculum and achieve the academic skills necessary to become proficient on the grade level CSTs. The IEP team must consider a student's needs and skills related to the general education curriculum, as determined by a variety of assessments including individualized curriculum-based measures, benchmark assessments, state standardized tests and other assessment tools as needed. For English Language Learners, the team must also consider the assessment results on the State required English proficiency test, California English Language Development test (CELDT) or its alternatives e.g., the Alternative Language Proficiency Instrument for Severely Disabled Students in making instructional decisions in regards to how the student will receive comprehensible input to the core curriculum.

Based upon the data that these assessments provide, the IEP team then determines the appropriate goal areas, including linguistically appropriate goals, based on the grade level content standards. Then the team decides what supports and assistive technology are needed to ensure the student's ability to participate fully in the classroom and on standardized tests (i.e., assigning accommodations or adaptations based on the aligned IEP). Based on this information, instruction can be designed to meet the specific needs of the student. Frequent progress monitoring helps teachers to know when to make adjustments so that progress can continue toward the mastery of the goal. With an aligned IEP, appropriate supports, and differentiated instruction, a student with disabilities is provided opportunities to meet high expectations through access to the grade-level general education core curriculum.

### **Participation in State or District Assessments of Student Achievement**

Consistent with Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, including a presumption that all children with disabilities will be included in state and district assessment programs and provided with appropriate accommodations if necessary, 34 CFR § 300.300.320(a)(6)(i)(ii) requires that the IEP for each student include:

(i) A statement of any individual appropriate accommodation that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on State and districtwide assessments consistent with section 612(a)(16) of the Act and

(ii) if the IEP team determines that the child must take an alternate assessment instead of a particular regular State or districtwide assessment of student

achievement, a statement of why

(A) the child cannot participate in the regular assessment

(B) the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the child

The use of a variety of assessments and assessment tools to determine appropriate instruction in the content based general education curriculum is required in the Conduct of Evaluation specified in Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations Section 300.304(b) [34CFR§300.304(b)]

(b) Conduct of Evaluation.—In conducting the evaluation, the local education agency must—

(1) use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional and developmental academic information, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining—

(i) whether the child is a child with a disability; under section 300.8; and

(ii) the content of the child's IEP, including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum (or for a preschool child, to participate in appropriate activities)

(B) not use a single measure of assessment as the sole criterion for determine whether a child is a child with a disability or determining an appropriate educational program for a child; and

(C) use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical development or developmental factors.

Since full participation in multiple assessments is required for students with disabilities in order to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum, including state and district assessments as well as diagnostic assessments, it is important to clarify what appropriate accommodations and modifications encompass.

### Statewide Assessment Terminology

The following terminology describes adaptations related to the testing of students in California. It is imperative that these same variations, accommodations and modifications that are used for statewide assessments also be utilized in daily classroom instruction.

**Variation:** a change in presentation, equipment and materials, response, schedule or timing and setting that is used regularly in the classroom with eligible students to allow them to participate in the test.

Variations do not change the construct of the test, but simply changes how the test is presented.

Some examples of variations are:

- Testing of the individual student separately, provided that a test examiner directly supervises the student
- Visual magnifying equipment

- ❑ Audio amplification equipment
- ❑ Noise buffers (e.g. individual study carrel or study enclosure)
- ❑ Special lighting or acoustics; special or adaptive equipment
- ❑ Colored overlay, mask, or other means to maintain visual attention
- ❑ Manually coded English or American Sign Language to present directions for administration (does not apply to test questions)
- ❑ Student marks in test booklet (other than responses)
- ❑ Student marks answers in test booklet and transcribes own answers to answer sheet

**Accommodation:** An accommodation is a change in how a test is presented, how a test is administered, or how a test taker responds, which is necessary to allow the student to participate in the test but does not fundamentally alter what the test measures or affect the comparability of scores.

An accommodation includes any variation of the assessment environment.

Some examples of accommodations are:

- ❑ a large print version of a test,
- ❑ a Braille transcription,
- ❑ an oral presentation of mathematics questions
- ❑ students mark responses in test booklet and responses are transcribed to an answer document by an employee of the school
- ❑ responses to multiple choice questions are dictated orally ( or in Manually coded English or American Sign Language
- ❑ word processing software with spell and grammar tools turned off for essay responses
- ❑ essay responses dictated orally or in Manually coded English, audio recorder, or speech-to-text converter when the student provides all spelling and language conventions
- ❑ assistive devices that do not interfere with the independent work of the student on the multiple-choice and/or essay responses
- ❑ extra time on a test within a testing day
- ❑ test over more than one day for a test part to be administered in a single setting
- ❑ supervised breaks within a section of the test
- ❑ administration of the test at the most beneficial time of day for the student
- ❑ math or science test questions read or provided through Manually coded English or American Sign Language
- ❑ test questions read aloud or audio presentation (CD) for math and science

**Modification:** A modification is a change in how a test is presented, how a test is administered, or how the test taker is allowed to respond that fundamentally alters what the test measures or affects the comparability of scores.

A modification includes a variation of the assessment environment or process.

Some examples of modifications are:

- ❑ using a calculator in mathematics problems
- ❑ Reading, Language or Spelling questions presented in Manually coded English or American Sign Language
- ❑ Reading, Language or Spelling questions read aloud to student or audio presentation (CD)
- ❑ use of a dictionary
- ❑ calculators or the mathematics or science tests
- ❑ arithmetic tables on the mathematics of science tests
- ❑ math manipulatives on the mathematics of science tests
- ❑ work processing software with spell and grammar check tools enabled on the essay responses or writing portions of the test
- ❑ essay responses dictated orally, Manually coded English, or in American Sign Language to a scribe, audio recorder, or speech-to-text converter in which the scribe provides the spelling. Grammar and language conventions.
- ❑ Assistive devices that interfere with the independent work of the student on the multiple-choice and/or essay responses

In order to maintain consistency across the major state assessments, testing adaptations have been classified as either Variations (1), Accommodations (2) or Modifications (3) for students with IEPs.

California Department of Education has provided the following definitions for statewide assessment:

**All:** These test variations may be provided to all students.

**Test Variation (1):** Eligible students may have testing variations if the variations are regularly used in the classroom.

**Accommodation (2):** Eligible students shall be permitted to take the examination/test with accommodations if specified in the eligible student's IEP or Section 504 Plan for use on the examination, on standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessment.

**Modification (3):** For the STAR Program and California English Language Development Test (CELDT), eligible students shall be permitted to take the tests with modifications if specified in the eligible students' IEP or Section 504 Plan.

more information on variations, accommodations and modifications may be found on the California Department of Education's website at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/documents/matrix5.pdf>

### ***CAHSEE Accommodations/ Modifications***

Eligible students are permitted to take the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) with modifications, if specified in the eligible student's IEP or Section

504 Plan. These modifications can be used on the examination, during standardized testing, or during classroom instruction and assessment. (Title 5 California Code of Regulations, Section 1216) This is the case, even though the scores of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students who take the CAHSEE with modifications, other than a calculator, will not count toward participation under NCLB. Students who use modifications on the CAHSEE and receive an equivalent of a passing score, however, may receive a high school diploma if they satisfy all other state requirements, and receive a waiver from their local school board, as set forth in California Education Code Section 60851(c). For more information on the CAHSEE waiver see: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/waiverexemptltr.asp>

## **Alternate Assessments**

For students who cannot participate in the grade level general assessment with accommodations, the federal law allows for alternate assessments for these populations of students.

IDEA addresses guidelines for participation in alternate assessments that are aligned to the state's challenging academic content and challenging student academic achievement standards.

[612(a)(16)(A) of IDEA]

(C) Alternate assessments.--

(i) In general.--The State (or, in the case of a districtwide assessment, the local educational agency) has developed and implemented guidelines for the participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments for those children who cannot participate in regular assessments under subparagraph (A) with accommodations as indicated in their respective individualized education programs.

(ii) Requirements for alternate assessments.--The guidelines under clause (i) shall provide for alternate assessments that--

(I) are aligned with the State's challenging academic content standards and challenging student academic achievement standards; and

(II) if the State has adopted alternate academic achievement standards permitted under the regulations promulgated to carry out section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, measure the achievement of children with disabilities against those standards.

(iii) Conduct of alternate assessments.--The State conducts the alternate assessments described in this subparagraph.

## **Determining Eligibility for Alternate Assessment**

Alternate assessment is a substitute approach used in gathering information about the performance and progress of students who do not participate in typical state assessments. Under IDEA, alternate assessments are to be used to measure the performance of students who are unable to participate in the regular assessment system, even with accommodations, and are based on grade level standards. (Elliot, J. & Thurlow, M. 2006)

Below is a form that the California Department of Education uses to determine if a student is an appropriate candidate to take the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA).

**California Department of Education  
California Alternate Performance Assessment  
Participation Criteria**

Revised January 30, 2004 by the CDE

Eligibility for the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) is based on a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), which reflects an emphasis on functional life skills. In order to aid an IEP team in its determination of whether a student should be assessed by using the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA), the following can be considered:

**Circle "Agree" or "Disagree" for each item:**

1. The student requires extensive instruction in multiple settings to acquire, maintain, and generalize skills necessary for application in school, work, home, and community environments.

**Agree      Disagree**

2. The student demonstrates academic/cognitive ability and adaptive behavior that require substantial adjustments to the general education curriculum. The student may participate in many of the same activities as their non-disabled peers; however, their learning objectives and expected outcomes focus on the functional applications of the general education curriculum.

**Agree      Disagree**

3. The student cannot address the performance level assessed in the statewide assessment, even with accommodations or modifications.

**Agree      Disagree**

4. The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is not based on the amount of time the student is receiving special education services.

**Agree      Disagree**

5. The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is not based on

excessive or extended absences.

**Agree**      **Disagree**

6. The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is not based on language, cultural, or economic differences.

**Agree**      **Disagree**

7. The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is not based on deafness/blindness, visual, auditory, and/or motor disabilities.

**Agree**      **Disagree**

8. The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is not primarily based on a specific categorical label.

**Agree**      **Disagree**

9. The decision for alternate assessment is an IEP team decision, rather than an administrative decision.

**Agree**      **Disagree**

If the answer to any of the statements is “Disagree,” the team should consider including the student in the standard STAR assessments (California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition Survey [CAT/6] and California Standards Tests [CSTs]) with the use of any necessary accommodations or modifications.

### ***California Modified Assessment***

California is currently developing an alternate assessment based on grade level standards to meet the needs of those students who are not likely to reach grade level achievement in the same time frame as students without disabilities, but can make progress toward grade level achievement. There will be no limitation on how many students may participate, but only up to 2% can be counted as proficient or above for the purposes of calculating AYP. The California Modified Achievement test will be aligned with the CA Content Standards and will not preclude students from earning a regular high school diploma.

The assessment will provide access to grade-level curriculum for the grade in which the student is enrolled, and be aligned with the State’s academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled. The significant difference in this assessment is the access that is allowed through varying test formats and the inclusion of built in accommodations into the construct of the assessment. The specific strategies used to access the CMA are the same strategies or scaffolds that should be used in instruction.

## Conclusion

In order to create a plan for a students' progress toward the grade level content standards, multiple academic measures and a variety of assessments should be utilized to determine what IEP goals should be addressed. Data from these multiple measures and assessments provide the information needed to identify appropriate program supports and modifications for the student to make academic progress in the general education core. In addition to the development of the IEP, assessment data from frequent progress monitoring, benchmark and other formative assessments should drive instructional planning.

Standardized tests can also be one of the multiple measures that teachers use to improve how they address student needs by showing where specific instruction may be needed. From these results, teachers can develop programs to help individual students use their existing skills and knowledge effectively and to help students develop skills and knowledge that may be lacking. With this in mind, one can see how teaching and assessment are not separate functions. Assessment is an integral part of deciding what should be taught. Assessments alone cannot improve educational outcomes; however when instruction responds to the data, educational improvement will occur for **all** students.

DRAFT

## Lesson Three Review- The Principle of Assessment and Accountability

1. Assessment today has many different purposes including:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Answer:

Assessment has many different purposes today including:

- Federal Accountability
- State Accountability
- District Accountability
- School Accountability
- Program/Instructional Accountability
- Individual Student Accountability

2. Types of assessments include:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

Types of assessment include:

- Criterion-Referenced tests
- Norm-Referenced test
- Standards-Based Assessment
- Benchmark Assessment
- Alternate Assessment
- Performance Assessment
- Portfolio Assessment

- Curriculum-Based Assessment
- Formative Assessment
- Progress Monitoring

3. The California Standardized Testing and Reporting System (STAR) system includes the following assessments:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

- CAT/6:** California Achievement Test, 6th Edition Survey
- CST:** California Standards Test
- Aprenda 3:** Aprenda, La prueba de logros en español, Tercera edición
- CAPA:** California Alternate Performance Assessment

4. By the 2009-2010 school year \_\_\_\_\_ % of students will need to be proficient in order to meet the AYP target in English Language arts, and \_\_\_\_\_ % proficient in math.

Answer:

By the 2009-2010 school year **56.8 %** of students will need to be proficient in order to meet the AYP target in English Language arts, and **58%** proficient in math.

5. The California Statewide IEP Task Force recognized the focus on standards and progress on the general education curriculum. The made the following statements:

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

The California Statewide IEP Task Forces recognized the focus on California standards and progress in the general education curriculum.

4. The student's strengths serve as the foundation of the IEP, balanced by considerations of access and progress in the general education curriculum and factors related to the student's disability.
5. The IEP must be based on state content standards and connected to statewide assessment and accountability.
6. Multiple assessment sources must determine how a student learns and what supports are needed to succeed (e.g., knowledge, skills, academic strengths).

6. The following terminology describes adaptations related to testing students in California.
  - a. Variation:

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- b. Accommodation

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- c. Modification

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Answer:

Variation- a change in presentation, equipment and materials, response, schedule or timing and setting that is used regularly in the classroom with eligible students to allow them to participate in the test.

Accommodation—an accommodation is a change in how a test is presented, how a test is administered, or how a test taker responds, which is necessary to allow the student to participate in the test but does not fundamentally alter what the test measures or affect the comparability of scores.

Modification—a modification is a change in how a test is presented, how a test is administered, or how the test taker is allowed to respond that fundamentally alters what the test measures or affects the comparability of scores.

6. Students who use a modification on the CAHSEE may receive a high school diploma if they satisfy all other state requirements, a long as they receive a \_\_\_\_\_ from their local school board as set forth in California Education Code Section 60851(c).

Answer:

Students who use a modification on the CAHSEE may receive a high school diploma if they satisfy all other state requirements, as long as they receive a **waiver** from their local school board as set forth in California Education Code Section 60851(c).

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## Least Restrictive Environment: Access and Opportunity to Learn in the General Education Curriculum

### Lesson Four Reading

By the end of this lesson, participants will have knowledge of:

12. What constitutes the Least Restrictive Environment?
13. The purpose and intent of special education.
14. What involvement in the General Education Curriculum means for students with disabilities according to IDEA'04.
15. What special education in the LRE can look like.
16. How IDEA'04 defines the 13 Disability categories.

As mandated by IDEA, as amended in 2004, students with special needs have a right to access the general education curriculum. While school districts are mandated to provide maximum access to the general education curriculum and grade level content standards, a student with special needs may need additional support through the IEP to meet those standards. The goal for students with special needs is to have the same learning opportunities as their general education peers. Providing alternate curriculum and lowered standards in segregated settings does not meet the federal mandates or civil rights of these students. The trend toward inclusive education is in response to the NCLB mandates of accountability mentioned in Section 3, and the research that shows that students with special needs receiving instruction in the grade level core have proven to have more positive outcomes.

*Each public agency must ensure that-- To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34CFR §300.314(a)(2)(i)(ii)*

#### What is the Least Restrictive Environment?

In short the Least Restrictive Environment is the instructional environment closest to that of a typically developing student of the same chronological age, and is where the child would be placed in the absence of a disability. If the child is excluded from the regular class for any part of the day, the team must explain the extent to which, and the rationale why, a child will not participate with non-disabled children. The IEP team must also determine the necessary program supports and modifications needed for the child to be involved in and make progress in the the general education core curriculum. This progress must be

reasonably calculated within the services provided in such a way that will benefit the child.

The following charts make it very clear that placing students in the least restrictive environment is not an option, but is the law, and that this law does not allow for the placement of students based on disability category or a single placement option. These charts clarify that placing a student physically in a general education class is not LRE, especially when placed with students who are not of the same chronological age. LRE does not mean “dumping” special education students into general education classes without appropriate support and services. The best way to define appropriate inclusive education is membership. In an appropriate LRE placement, the students with disabilities are supported members of age-appropriate general education classes and programs in their home school communities.

## The Least Restrictive Environment

The Least Restrictive Environment	
LRE IS:	LRE IS NOT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ required by federal and state law.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ an "option".</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ where students with disabilities have the opportunity to attend their home schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ educating students with disabilities without considering their home school.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ an individualized determination of the appropriate placement which is made by the IEP team, including the student as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ special education placement based upon the category of disability (e.g., All students with Down syndrome are educated in special classes).</li> <li>✘ placement of only students with mild disabilities in general education classrooms.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ consideration of the full array of services to meet individual student needs, including supplementary aids and services provided in the general classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ considering only one placement option within the array of services.</li> </ul>

# The Least Restrictive Environment

<b>The Least Restrictive Environment</b>	
<b>LRE IS:</b>	<b>LRE IS NOT:</b>
¥ placement of students with disabilities with peers of the same chronological age.	¥ placement of students with disabilities with peers who are not of the same chronological age.
¥ bringing supports and services to students where they need them (e.g., in general education class or in community vocational setting, etc.).	¥ making IEP teams choose between needed services and a preferred appropriate placement.
¥ educating students in general education classrooms with appropriate supports and services.	¥ "dumping" students in general education classrooms without appropriate supports.
¥ providing access to all areas of the general education curriculum.	¥ providing a separate, unrelated curriculum to the general education curriculum.
¥ collaboration and shared responsibility among general and special educators, administrators, parents, and students with disabilities.	¥ special educators assuming sole responsibility for the education of students with disabilities.

Adapted from: Falvey, Shrag & Villa (1999) Unpublished document

LRE Resources Project, WestEd Center for Prevention and Early Intervention

## What is Special Education?

Special education is defined as specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability—at no cost to parents. Specially designed instruction means adapting the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction:

- To meet the unique needs of the student with a disability
- To ensure access to the general education curriculum so a student can meet educational standards that apply to all children within the jurisdiction of the public agency

Special education can include physical education that includes special physical education, adapted physical education, movement education, and motor development. Speech-language pathology, audiology services, and other related services may be provided as part of a special education program for a student, as it is required to assist an individual with exceptional needs to benefit from special education. Travel training and vocational education is also considered part of special education if the standards in Section 300.39 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations are met.

—from Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 300.39 [34 CFR §

300.39]

### **Where is Special Education Instruction Provided?**

Special education instruction can be provided in a number of settings: in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings.  
—from 34 CFR § 300.39

Public agencies must ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities [34 CFR § 300.115(a)]. This continuum must include the placements mentioned above and must make provision for supplementary services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction) to be provided in conjunction with placement in a general education classroom. Unless a student's IEP requires some other arrangement, the student must be educated in the school the student would attend if the student did not have a disability [34 CFR § 300.116(c)]. The IDEA further states that a child with a disability is not removed from education in an age-appropriate regular classroom solely because of needed modifications in the general education curriculum. [34 CFR § 300.116(e)]. In addition, the IEP team must provide an explanation of the extent to which a child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class and extracurricular and other non-academic activities. [34 CFR § 300.320(5)].

The LRE requires that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities are educated with children who are nondisabled. [34 CFR § 300.114(a)(2)(i)]. Each public agency must ensure that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the general education environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily [34 CFR § 300.114(a)(2)(ii)].

### **Involvement and Progress of Each Child with a Disability in the General Education Curriculum**

In enacting the IDEA amendments of 2004, Congress found that research, demonstration, and practice in special education and related services over the past 30 years revealed that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by an educational system that maintains high academic standards and clear performance goals for children with disabilities. The goals and standards for children with disabilities are consistent with the standards and expectations for all students in the educational system. They also provide appropriate and effective strategies and methods to ensure that children with disabilities have maximum opportunities to achieve those standards and goals. [20 USC § 1412(a)(5)]

Accordingly, the evaluation and IEP provisions of Part B of IDEA, as amended in 2004, place emphasis on involvement and progress of children with disabilities in the general education curriculum. (The term "general education curriculum," as used in these regulations refers to the curriculum that is the same curriculum taught to children without disabilities) [34 CFR § 300.320(a)(4)(ii)]. While IDEA, as amended in 2004, and its regulations recognize that IEP teams must make individualized decisions about the special education, related services, and supplementary aids and services provided to each student with a disability, they are driven by the strong preference that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with appropriate supplementary aids and services in general education classes with peers without disabilities.

In order to successfully progress in the general education curriculum, children with disabilities need appropriate supports to participate in state and district assessment programs, to achieve measurable IEP goals, and to be educated with peers without disabilities. Accordingly, the law requires IEP teams to determine, and public agencies to provide, accommodations, supports, and supplementary aids and services needed by each student with a disability to successfully:

- Be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum
- Achieve the goals of the IEP
- Demonstrate his or her competencies in state, district, and local assessments.

These supplementary aids and services are defined as aids, services and other supports that are provided in regular education classes, other education related settings, and in extracurricular and non-academic settings, to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate. [34 CFR § 300.42 ]. Further states are encouraged to use funding to improve the use of technology in the classroom by children with disabilities to enhance learning and to support the use of technology, including technology with universal design principles and assistive technology devices, to maximize accessibility to the general education curriculum for children with disabilities. [34 CFR § 300.704(b)(4)(v)]. The LRE mandates access to the core curriculum. With appropriate supplementary aids and services utilizing assistive technology and universal design principles, progress in the grade level core curriculum is a viable aspiration.

### What Does Special Education in the LRE Look Like?

**This LRE then can look like a variety of models where students can receive services from the special educator in a variety of ways.**

**Consultative support by the special educator**

- This student is successful in the general education core with minor support from the special educator. The special educator may initially teach the student and the general education teacher how to use the assistive technology or the special educator works in collaboration with the general educator to provide materials or other instructional accommodation for the students' success in the core curriculum.

### **Collaborative support by the special educator**

- This student is instructed in the general education core with more support from the special educator. This support in coordination with the general educator may or may not occur in the general education setting. This support may be on a regular basis or on an as needed basis. The services provided support the general education core, but may also include supplemental instruction in pre-requisite skills as needed.

### **Special educator and general educator teaching in a co-teaching model.**

- In this model both teachers share the same work space, and provide instruction in a variety of ways: ie. one teaching one monitoring, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching and team teaching. In this model the student may receive instruction from both teachers and the instructional support provided occurs on a regular basis.

### **Instruction in the core curriculum in the general education setting with supplemental support by the special educator.**

- This model provides the student with supplemental instructional support beyond the core curriculum. Depending on the area of need, this support can be a study skills class, or can be an additional period of instruction in a core content area. This supplemental support can happen in the general education setting, but may also occur in a separate place depending on the needs of the child.

### **Intensive intervention program instruction in place of the core curriculum provided by the special educator or other qualified specialist**

- This model provides the student with small group direct instruction in the identified area of need as determined by the IEP team. This intensive intervention instruction can occur in the general education setting, but most often occurs in a segregated setting where a small group can benefit from intensive instruction in order to accelerate learning in a particular area of need. This student spends the majority of their day in a general education setting.

## **Intensive intervention instruction and support in more than one core area provided by the special educator or other qualified specialist**

- This model provides the student with small group instruction for more than two periods a day or more than 50% of the day. This intensive intervention usually occurs in a segregated setting with the students still spending at least some part of the school day in the general education setting.

## **Intensive intervention instruction and support for the entire school day provided by the special educator or other qualified specialists**

- This model is often reserved for students with more significant low incidence disabilities and those who find that *“the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily”*.

The IEP team determines which level of support is needed based on the multidisciplinary team assessment and specific student strengths and needs.

### **How Does IDEA, as Amended in 2004, Define the 13 Disability Categories?**

IDEA, as amended 2004, provides definitions of the 13 disability categories. These federal definitions guide how states define who is eligible for a free appropriate public education under the new IDEA. The definitions of disability terms are as follows:

#### **1. Autism ...**

... means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects educational performance. Characteristics often associated with autism are engaging in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to changes in daily routines or the environment, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term autism does not apply if the child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has emotional disturbance, as defined in #4 below.

A child who shows the characteristics of autism after age three could be diagnosed as having autism if the criteria above are satisfied.

#### **2. Deaf-Blindness ...**

... means simultaneous hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

#### **3. Deafness ...**

... means a hearing impairment so severe that a child is so impaired in

processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that it adversely affects a child's educational performance.

#### **4. Emotional Disturbance ...**

... means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

- a. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors
- b. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers
- c. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances
- d. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- e. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems (the term includes schizophrenia, but the term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance)

#### **5. Hearing Impairment ...**

... means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance, but that is not included under the definition of "deafness."

#### **6. Mental Retardation ...**

... means significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning—existing at the same time as deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period—that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

#### **7. Multiple Disabilities ...**

... means simultaneous impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness, mental retardation-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

#### **8. Orthopedic Impairment ...**

... means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, fractures or burns that cause contractures).

#### **9. Other Health Impairment ...**

... means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to

the educational environment. The impairments:

- a. Is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, or sickle cell anemia, and Tourette's Syndrome
- b. Adversely affect a child's educational performance

#### **10. Specific Learning Disability ...**

... means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to compute mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; of mental retardation; of emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

#### **11. Speech or Language Impairment ...**

... means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, or a language or voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

#### **12. Traumatic Brain Injury ...**

... means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. The term does not include brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or brain injuries incurred by birth trauma.

#### **13. Visual Impairment Including Blindness ...**

... means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

### **Summary**

The Least Restrictive Environment mandate makes it clear that unnecessary segregation of students is not just against the law, but is detrimental to students in obtaining both the academic and life skills needed to be participating members of society. All students, even the most significantly disabled, have the right to access the general education curriculum and grade level standards. When given opportunities to learn with grade level peers, these students have proven to have

more positive outcomes both academically and socially, equipping them for a more successful adult life.

**DRAFT**

# Lesson Four Review- Least Restrictive Environment: Access and Opportunity to Learn in the General Education Curriculum

1. What is the Least Restrictive Environment?

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Answer:

the Least Restrictive Environment is the instructional environment closest to that of a typically developing student of the same chronological age, and is where the child would be placed in the absence of a disability.

2. What is special education?

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Answer:

Special education is defined as instruction that is specially designed, at no cost to parents, to meet the child's unique needs. Special education can include instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings. It can include instruction in physical education as well.

3. Where is special education instruction provided?

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Answer:

Special education instruction can be provided in a number of settings, such as: in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings.

4. Define the term: "general education curriculum" according to IDEA.

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Answer: The curriculum that is the same curriculum taught to children without disabilities.

5. List the variety of models in which students can receive special education services in the LRE:

- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

- Consultative support by the special educator
- Collaborative support by the special educator
- Special educator and general educator co-teaching model
- Instruction in the core curriculum in the general education setting with supplemental support by the special educator
- Intensive intervention program instruction in place of the core curriculum provided by the special educator or other qualified specialist
- Intensive intervention instruction and support in more than one core area provided by the special educator or other qualified specialist
- Intensive intervention instruction and support for the entire school day provided by the special education teacher or other qualified specialist

3. Match the 13 disability categories to their definitions by filling in the correct letter of the definition next to the disability.

Disability	Definition
___ Autism	A. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears

	associated with personal or school problems.
___ Deaf-Blindness	B. Clubfoot, absence of some member, poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, cerebral palsy, amputations and fractures or burns that cause contractures.
___ Deafness	C. Caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory perceptual and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech.
___ Emotional Disturbance	D. Developmental disability affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction evident before age three. Engages in repetitive activities, resists changes in daily routines and responds unusually to sensory experiences.
___ Hearing Impairment	E. A permanent or fluctuating impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
___ Mental Retardation	F. Having limited strength, vitality, or alertness; heightened alertness to environmental stimuli.
___ Multiple Disabilities	G. An impairment that can result in partial sight or blindness.
___ Orthopedic Impairment	H. A simultaneous impairment causing severe communication and educational needs.
___ Other Health Impairment	I. Sub-average general intellectual functioning with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the

	developmental period.
___ Specific Learning Disability	J. A disorder in understanding or in using language, spoken or written including perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.
___ Speech or Language Impairment	K. A severe impairment in processing auditory linguistic information.
___ Traumatic Brain Injury	L. Simultaneous impairments such as mental retardation-blindness or mental retardation-orthopedic impairment.
___ Visual Impairment Including Blindness	M. A communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment.

Answer:

- D** Autism
- H** Deaf-Blindness
- K** Deafness
- A** Emotional Disturbance
- E** Hearing Impairment
- I** Mental Retardation
- L** Multiple Disabilities
- B** Orthopedic Impairment
- F** Other Health Impairment
- J** Specific Learning Disability
- M** Speech or Language Impairment
- C** Traumatic Brain Injury
- G** Visual Impairment Including Blindness

## **Standards-Aligned IEPs**

### **Lesson Five Reading**

**At the end of this lesson, the participant will:**

- 1. Identify the purposes and benefits of standards-aligned IEPs.**
- 2. Identify the key changes in the IDEA'04 Regulations pertaining to the IEP.**
- 3. Identify strategies in determining appropriate special education programs and placement based on IEP goals**
- 4. Identify the process in identifying and writing goals aligned to grade level standards**
- 5. How to implement standards-aligned instruction to support the attainment of IEP goals**

### **Why Standards Aligned IEPs?**

**IEPs provide a structure for setting high standards and measuring student outcomes by defining and documenting how students with disabilities will participate and progress in the general education curriculum as well as how they will participate in statewide assessments (Nolet & McLaughlin, 2005, Shriner & Destefano, 2003, Thompson, Thurlow, Quenemoen, Esler & Whetstone, 2001).**

**As teachers are being held increasingly accountable for student outcomes based on standardized assessments, it is crucial that students with disabilities are provided the same opportunities to learn the core content as their peers. There is a very strong link between access to the general education curriculum and student performance on these statewide assessments. The new focus and attention on the needs of struggling students has prompted teachers and administrators to improve outcomes for students with disabilities by linking IEP goals to standards; driving access to the core curriculum.**

### **The Elements of a Standards-Based Educational System**

**Students in standards aligned educational systems are expected to achieve to high standards. These standards are aligned incorporating key elements of figure 5.1.**

**These key elements include:**

- State content standards that define what students should know and be able to do at the end of a particular grade level**
- Indicators of progress on these state content standards as periodic benchmark assessments to measure progress toward reaching the content standards.**
- General education curriculum that is aligned to the standards**

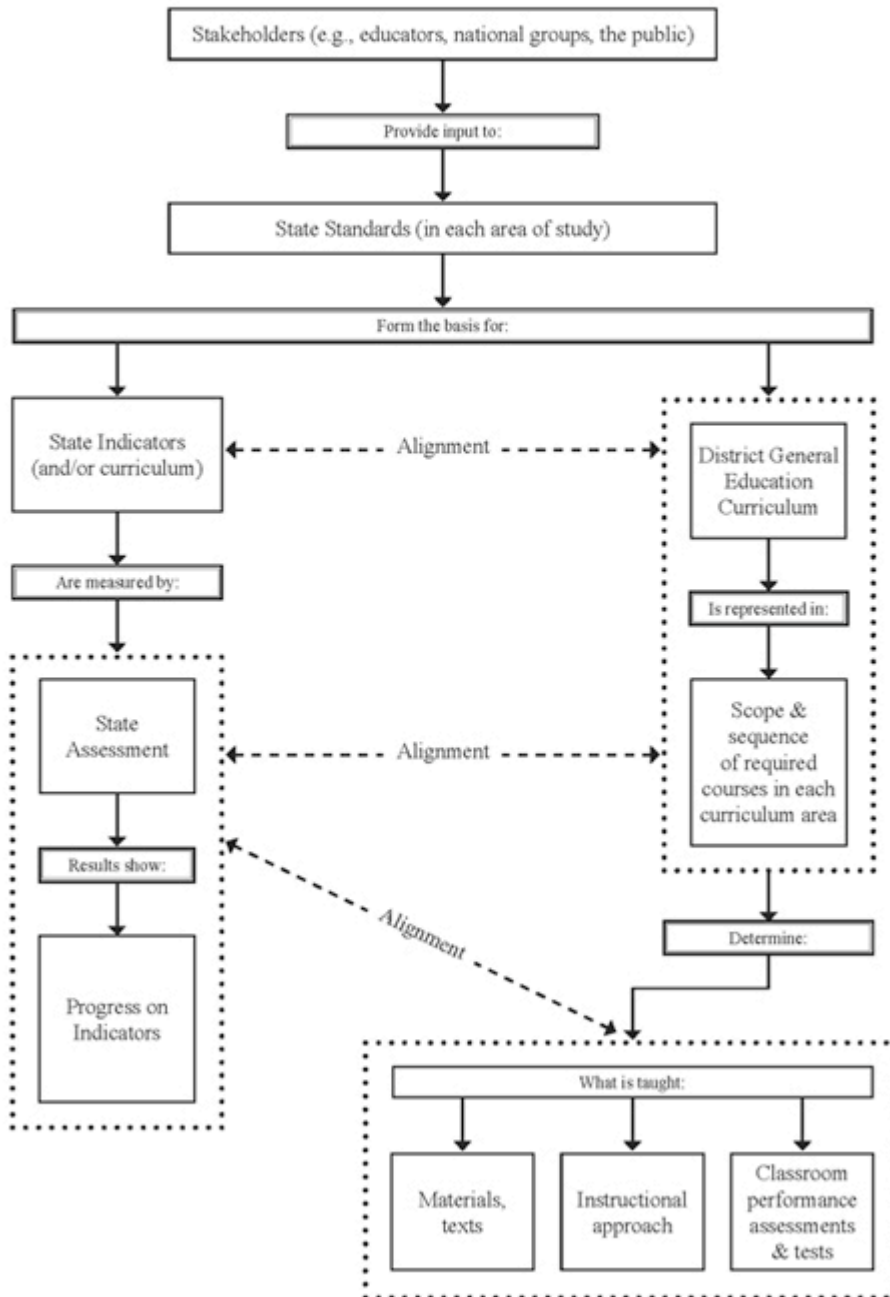
- **with a specific scope and sequence of the content.**
- **State accountability and assessment system that hold schools and districts accountable for teaching these approved content standards.**

**Since the instruction and accountability systems are aligned, there should be alignment between what is taught in the classroom and what is measured on state assessments (Access Center, 2006)**

**DRAFT**

# Standards-Based Educational System

## *Links Between Standards and Practice*



## Developing the Link to Standards Aligned Instruction for Students with Disabilities

Six areas to consider in developing the link between access to the core and state accountability assessments in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities include:

1. Heightened expectations for student performance.  
Since standards are based on high expectations, these higher expectations and effective instruction lead to improved achievement (Heubert, 2002).
2. Access to academic content and grade level standards.  
Content standards define the knowledge base in subject matter curricula and the decision to not teach specific content, concepts or standards at a grade level has implications for all future grades. (Nolet & McLaughlin, 2005) Teachers must determine the critical content necessary to achieve the standards.
3. Effective instruction.  
Access to the general education curriculum is enhanced by effective instruction. (Access Center, n.d.). Effective teaching includes instructional practices, assessment techniques, appropriate materials and implementation of appropriate accommodations. (Access Center Brief, Strategies to Improve Access to the General Education Curriculum.2005)
4. Standards-Based IEPs.  
The content of the IEP should be tied directly to providing the student with access to the same challenging state standards that peers without disabilities are receiving (McDonnell, McLaughlin, & Morison, 1997, McLaughlin, 1999, Thompson, Thurlow, Quenemoen, Esler, & Whetstone, 2001). The alignment between the IEP goals and the standards drives the specialized instruction; including the accommodations related to the students' disability allowing the child make progress in the general education curriculum.
  - Annuals goals that address students' needs may include:
    - Basic skills and/or prerequisite skills that underlie standards and grade level curriculum content.
      - Some goals might focus on improving underlying access skills needed to learn specific components of the content standards
      - IEP teams may decide to write goals that will drive remedial assistance in prerequisite skills

- Instructional access skills
  - Annual goals may emphasize skills that a student may need to access instruction
  - A goal may be built around a specific strategy that will support the attainment of another goal.
  - A goal may be written in the area of summarization that will support reading comprehension
- 5. Opportunities to participate in classroom tests that are aligned with content standards.

When tests are aligned to the general education curriculum, these tests provide an entry point for using standards to guide and improve instruction. If these tests measure essential information that is aligned with the general education curriculum, progress in the general education core becomes evident through these tests. Accommodations specified in the IEP must be incorporated into these classroom tests and activities.

6. Reporting student progress

Continuous assessment and progress monitoring throughout the year enables teachers and parent to track student progress on both IEP goals and on progress in the general education curriculum. This frequent progress monitoring allows teachers to take action and adjust instruction as needed based upon the ongoing assessments. (Access Center, 2006)

### IDEA '04 Regulations and Standards-aligned IEP Goals Short Term Objectives

While the basic integrity of the IEP has not changed dramatically in the IDEA'04 reauthorization in regards to writing goals, one of the biggest changes does include that short term objectives are no longer required except for those students who take an alternate assessment. The thinking behind this change is not that we no longer need to monitor progress on goals, but rather as schools move to the use of formative and benchmark assessments and frequent progress monitoring, this type of ongoing assessment will be occurring for all students. If all students are involved in this process as part of school-wide assessment or curriculum, students with disabilities should also be involved in these assessment processes and therefore have the assessment data that will show progress on goals.

Since students who take an alternate assessment may be using an alternate curriculum, the requirement to update goals via benchmarks does continue to exist, as these students may not be part of the school-wide benchmark assessments.

### IEP Member Attendance

In the development of IEP goals it is imperative that all IEP members have

input. IDEA'04 does allow for team members to not attend the IEP meeting if the district and parents agree in writing and if the members' area of curriculum or related service is not being modified or discussed in the meeting. If the team member does not attend, they must submit a report of progress in writing and should be allowed some input into the development of the goals. If changes to the IEP are made and goals are agreed upon, the district must ensure that all team members are made aware of the changes.

### Transition Goals

Goals addressing transition must be written no later than the IEP that will be in effect when the child turns 16. This transition plan must focus on post secondary goals and must contain appropriate measurable goals based on age appropriate transition assessment related to training, education, employment and if appropriate independent living skills. From these post secondary goals, transition services will need to include the course of study needed to assist the student in reaching those goals.

Sample Goal from: *Transition to Adult Living* (p.142, 2007)

**Goal:** *Student will identify the educational or training requirements for the career pathway or job cluster he or she is interested in.*

**Measures:** *By (date), through electronic media, student will research the educational and training requirements for the career pathway or job cluster that interests him or her and present information to the IEP transition planning meeting.*

### Goals Aligned to Standards

Consistency across classrooms, schools, districts, and the state is one of the benefits of aligning IEPs to state grade level content standards. With the implementation of state content standards, the same content is being taught in all classrooms across the state. Children have the benefit of an aligned curriculum wherever they go with the same academic expectations despite their location throughout the state. In the same way, when IEP goals reflect state content standards, special education students have the same benefit. In a transient society, the implementation of statewide content standards allows for a seamless continuity of instruction across the state that now includes special education students. At the student level, targeting instruction to the state standards allows students with disabilities access to the same general education curriculum as their peers.

The development of goals aligned to standards should include the following:

- The student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the disability affects involvement and progress in the general education core curriculum
- Annuals goals that address the student's involvement in and progress in the general education curriculum, including how the goals will be measured and how and when parents will be informed

- about progress
- Appropriate supplementary aides and services, accommodations, modifications or supports that enable the student to make progress in the core curriculum
- An explanation of the extent, if any, in which the child will NOT participate with non-disabled peers in the general education classroom
- A statement of appropriate accommodations necessary to measure academic achievement and functional performance on state and district assessments

### Making the Connection from Present Level of Performance to Content Aligned Goals

The IEP goal is the bridge from where the student is currently functioning to the grade level content standard. Based on current assessment and progress monitoring data, the areas of need are identified. Based on these areas of need, standards are targeted for intensive attention, which will be provided to the student through the IEP and “specially designed instruction”, required by IDEA.

### Targeting Goals

The question often arises about where to begin when determining which goals to target and at which level the targets should be set. Accessing the Blueprints for the California Standards Tests is the first step in determining where the student should begin. Since there are over 3,000 standards to choose from, the Blueprint is an effective tool that identifies the standard areas that are assessed on the CST. In order to ensure instruction that is aligned to these standards, it is imperative that the assessed standards become the content of the IEP goals.

The content standards within each grade are indicated by a numbering system of 1.1, 1.2, and so on. The California Content Standards are divided into domain areas (i.e., Reading, Writing, and Math). Each domain has different strands listed. For example, strands under math include: Number Sense (e.g., 1.0 Students understand the relationship between numbers and quantities). For reading, a strand might be: Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development (e.g., 1.0 Students know about letters, word, and sounds). Based upon student assessment and determined strengths and weaknesses, the strand in the grade level standard domain that is most appropriate can be identified as a goal area for that student.

In addition to the grade level standards, some students may need goals written for pre- skills as well. In the case of a fourth grader needing pre-requisite skills of decoding, it is difficult to write a grade level goal in this

area, as the decoding strand ends at the third grade. In this instance, IEP teams will have to write out of grade level goals along with grade level standards aligned goals.

For example, if a student is struggling with decoding and is reading below a first grade level, the following goal may be written in addition to a grade level goal.

#### 1.1.4 First Grade – phonemic awareness

*Distinguish initial, medial, and final sounds in single-syllable words.*

By (date) when given \_\_\_ words, (student) will identify initial, middle, and ending sounds with \_\_\_% accuracy in \_\_\_ consecutive trials as measured by teacher-made tests/charted records

### Grade Level Aligned Goals

For some, writing grade level aligned standards is a new concept for special education students. The previous practice of remediation strategies and pacing curriculum at a slower pace left students further and further behind in grade level skills. As the gaps in learning lengthened, it became more and more difficult to expect grade level skills from these students. It became traditional practice to write goals based on ability level only, often focusing only on pre-requisite skills and never providing the opportunity to develop grade level skills through aligned IEP goals. These same goals on basic skills were often repeated continuously without even the expectation that grade level standards could be achieved and therefore were never addressed.

Research on alignment shows that this is typical, and that most IEP forms lack the necessary components to connect true student need with the requirements of state standards (Access Center, 2004). Outcomes for students and adults with disabilities have been less than positive with less than 30% remaining unemployed or grossly underemployed (PCESE, 2002). It is for this reason that special education practices in the area of goal writing must be readjusted to reflect grade level standards.

### Accessing the Grade Level Standard

The greatest challenge faced by IEP teams is determining how a student whose skills may be several grade levels below their commensurate grade can achieve grade level standards. This is a frequent comment, “If they could do grade level goals why would they be in special education in the first place?” The difference is that they may only have a specific skill that is well below grade level, but the students overall cognitive ability and potential is at grade level.

Most students receiving special education services today have average cognitive skills and the ability to learn grade level materials. The challenge is how to allow the student to access those skills and how to measure the

skill despite the disability. Since students have the capability to obtain grade level skills, it is a disservice to them to continue to write only goals that address their weakest skill areas. If the entire focus of their education is on those weak areas, the student will not make progress toward grade level skills and will not have the skills necessary to obtain passing scores on the CSTs. Since the students are assessed on grade level skills, it is the responsibility of all educators involved to ensure that instruction driven by the IEP goals is centered on those grade level standards.

In the next section we will look more specifically at how IEP teams can address this difficult question and provide access to grade level standards to enhance the learning of the student. There is provision through accommodations, modifications, adaptations and assistive technology that make writing grade level goals a viable option for IEP teams.

### Enhancing the “Conditions” to Allow Access to Grade Level Goals

Ensuring that IEPs include the teaching and use of such access skills such as study skills, assistive technology, and appropriate scaffolding and organizational, students will not only be more successful in participating in the general education core, but can find success in achieving grade level skills prescribed in the IEP. When the IEP team considers the students needs when determining appropriate accommodations and access tools on the IEP, studies show that students gain more opportunities to meet high expectations with these appropriate supports and accommodations that are defined in the aligned IEP (Access Center, 2004)

For years teachers who have been writing IDEA compliant goals have routinely provided a “given” as one of the components. This “given” usually entailed the number of problems provided, or some other environmental factor given so that the child could show competence on that specific goal. It is this “condition” though that will allow students with disabilities access to grade level goals if utilized correctly. The conditions provided allow for the use of specifically name accommodations, adaptations or assistive technology that provides the student with materials, tools, environments, and strategies that allow them to accomplish grade level skills despite their disabilities.

Writing IEP goals with conditions that allow student access to grade level skills allows them to grow beyond basic skills to higher level thinking skills and greater opportunity for learning. For example a student with first grade reading skills may still have a goal written in the following strand at grade level.

#### *4.1.3 Vocabulary and concept Development*

*Use knowledge of root words to determine meaning of unknown words within a passage.(CAHSEE)*

By (date) when given a brief text passage accompanied by CD/tape containing words derived from at least three different root words, (student) will determine the meaning of the unknown words by applying knowledge of root words with \_\_\_\_% accuracy in \_\_\_ consecutive trials as measured by student work samples.

### Unlocking the Grade Level-Standards

In addition to adjusting the conditions to allow access to grade level standards, each standard usually has several areas within it that can be developed into a goal. In essence each standard has several areas that can be addressed by more specific goals. Teachers need to carefully consider the entire standard and decide if the student needs all of a particular standard or only part(s) of the standard. An example of “unlocking” a standard follows.

#### Literary Response Analysis

##### Sentence Structure

5.1.1 Identify and correctly use prepositional phrases, appositives, and independent and dependent clauses; use transitions and conjunctions to connect ideas.

There are technically ten portions to this standard.

1. Identify prepositional phrases
2. Correctly use prepositional phrases
3. Identify appositives
4. Correctly use appositives
5. Identify independent clauses
6. Correctly use independent clauses
7. Identify dependent clauses
8. Correctly use dependent clauses
9. Use transitions to connect ideas
10. Used conjunctions to connect ideas

After careful assessment, IEP teams should be able to accurately identify the portion of a standard that may need to be addressed. Once a portion of a standard is identified as an area of need, the teacher can write the student’s goal to address that particular area of need.

### Implementing Standards Aligned Instruction

Writing standards-aligned IEP goals is the very first step in ensuring that students have access to standards-aligned core curriculum and other grade level opportunities. Without this first step it is difficult to get all educators on the same page in relation to the expectations as well as the instruction for the students. Again, when standards are utilized to drive the IEP, instruction based upon the standards will follow. When such alignment occurs students are ensured to be included in standards-based systems, with resulting benefits such as increased exposure to challenging curriculum, higher expectations, and improved performance in

state accountability systems (McLaughlin, Nolet, Rhim, & Henderson, 1999, Quenemon, Lehr, Thurlow, & Massanari, 2001, Thompson, Thurlow, Quenomon, Esler, & Whetstone, 2001).

When the common language of standards is employed and teachers are given time to collaborate, shared ownership of the student occurs. Both the general education and general education teacher are responsible for implementing the instruction prescribed in the IEP. The general education setting becomes a place where meaningful instruction can and does occur. It no longer becomes the sole responsibility of the special education to ensure that the instruction necessary to meet the goals occurs. This shared responsibility is one of the many positive outcomes found in standards aligned instruction. When using aligned IEPs, educators do tend to focus on higher expectations rather than on student deficits (Thompson, et al. 2001).

### Standards-Aligned Instruction Implementation Strategies

In order for both general and special educators to implement standards-aligned instruction for students with disabilities they need to:

- Be familiar with the standards
- Assess for present levels of performance and areas of strength and need
- Align IEP to standards
- Incorporate research based teaching strategies to meet the standards addressed in the IEP

### The trademarks of a standards aligned classroom are:

- Students know the standards and the level of proficiency required to meet these standards
- Students and parents are aware of proficiency measures
- Students are provided multiple opportunities to learn
- Assignments reflect an integration of facts, content and strategies
- Each assignment is an informal assessment in itself

### The questions that teachers need to address in order to unpack and teach to the standards:

- Now that they are linked to goals, how do I teach the standards?
- What do the standards look like in the instructional process?
- How do I know that I have taught the standards?
- How will I know that students have met the standard?
- What will the evidence be?
- What benchmark assessment tasks will enable me to determine to which extend the content has been mastered?
- How can I use benchmark assessment tasks to guide my instruction, lessons and assignments?

**When instruction for *all* students is framed by the standards, you will find:**

- Students know the standards and the level of proficiency required to meet these standards
  - Students and parents are aware of proficiency measures
  - Students are provided multiple opportunities to learn
  - Assignments reflect an integration of facts, content and strategies
  - Each assignment is an informal assessment in itself
- (Elliot, J., Thurlow, M., 2006)

### **Conclusion**

In summary, ensuring that standards are addressed begins with the IEP team developing goals aligned to grade level content standards. Standards aligned instruction provides the instructional opportunities to meet IEP goals. Instruction within the grade level core content area provides students with disabilities the opportunity to progress in the standards and succeed on statewide assessments. Making progress in grade level core content allows students with disabilities equitable options for post secondary life.

DRAFT

## Lesson Five Review- Standards-Aligned IEPs

1. Describe the key elements of a standards-based educational system

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

**These key elements include:**

- State content standards that define what students should know and be able to do at the end of a particular grade level**
- Indicators of progress on these state content standards as periodic benchmark assessments to measure progress toward reaching the content standards.**
- General education curriculum that is aligned to the standards with a specific scope and sequence of the content.**
- State accountability and assessment system that hold schools and districts accountable for teaching these approved content standards.**

2. Six areas to consider when developing the link between access to the core and state accountability assessments to improve outcomes for students with disabilities include:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

- Heightened expectations for student performance
- Access to academic content and grade level standards
- Effective instruction
- Standards-Based IEPs
- Opportunities to practice classroom tests that are aligned with content standards
- Reporting student progress

3. The development of goals aligned to standards should include the following:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer: The development of goals aligned to standards should include:

- The student’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the disability affects involvement and progress in the general education core curriculum
- Annuals goals that address the student’s involvement in and progress in the general education curriculum, including how the goals will be measured and how and when parents will be informed about progress
- Appropriate supplementary aides and services, accommodations, modifications or supports that enable the student to make progress in the core curriculum
- An explanation of the extent, if any, in which the child will NOT participate with non-disabled peers in the general education classroom
- A statement of appropriate accommodations necessary to measure academic achievement and functional performance on state and district assessments

4. What tool can IEP teams use to target grade level standards aligned goals?

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Answer: Accessing the California Standards Test Blueprints at the CDE website are the first step in determining which goals to target in the IEP.

5. Give an example of how an IEP team might enhance the “given” or conditions of an IEP goals to enhance a student’s access to the grade level standard.

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Answer: The conditions might allow for the use of specific accommodations, adaptations or assistive technology such as a voice to text software, or text on CD.

6. In looking at “unlocking” a grade level standard, what decisions do teachers need to make?

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Answer: Teachers need to carefully consider the entire standard and decide if the student needs all of or a particular strand or only part(s) of the standard.

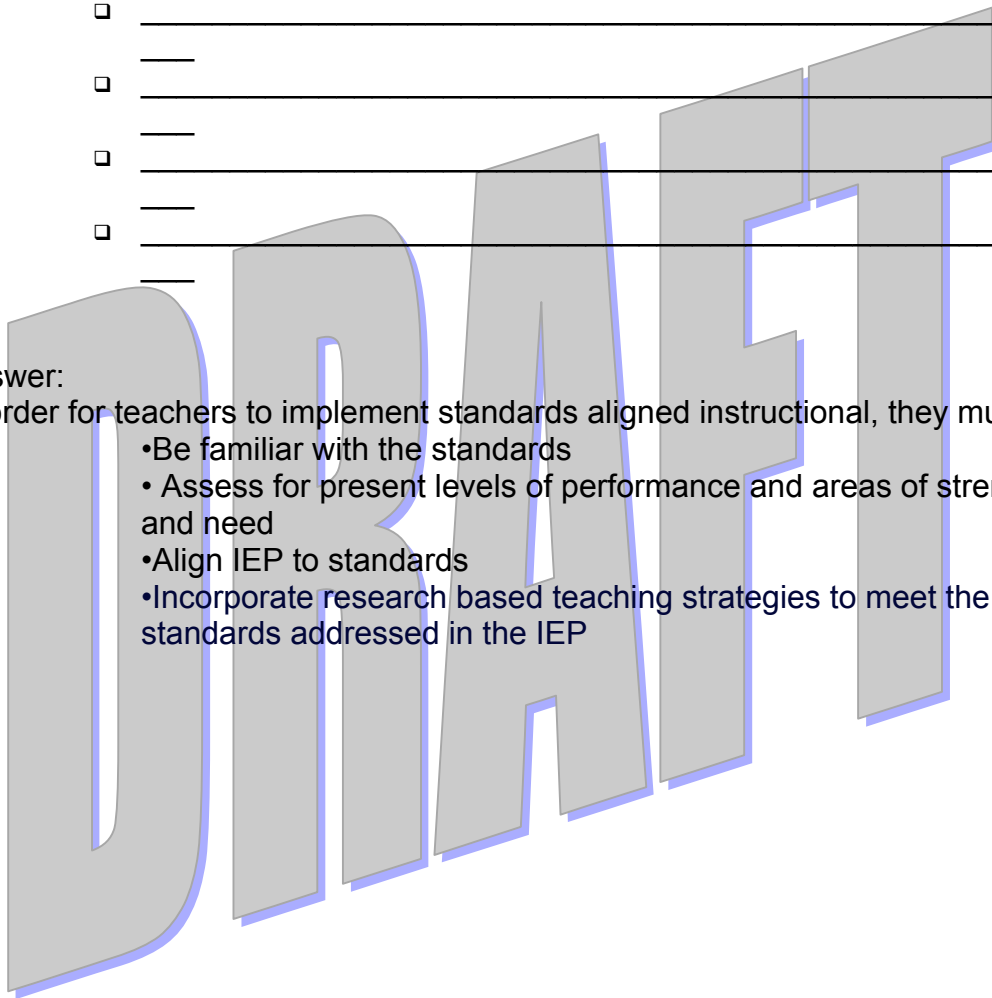
7. In order for teachers to implement standards aligned instructional, they must:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

In order for teachers to implement standards aligned instructional, they must:

- Be familiar with the standards
- Assess for present levels of performance and areas of strength and need
- Align IEP to standards
- Incorporate research based teaching strategies to meet the standards addressed in the IEP



## Writing Measurable Annual Goals and Objectives/Benchmarks Related to California Content Standards

### Lesson Six Reading

At the end of this lesson participants have knowledge of:

1. IDEA'04 regulations that pertain to the development of the IEP and IEP goals.
2. Identify the components of standards-aligned goals.
3. Linguistically appropriate goals for students who are both EL and Special Education.
4. Goals aligned to standards for students who take an alternate assessment.

### Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives/Benchmarks Required in the IDEA, as Amended in 2004

#### Present Levels of Performance

The first step in goal development is to determine the present levels of performance. It is critical that this present level of performance include multiple measures and should involve a variety of assessments discussed in section three of this web module. The goals developed from these multiple measures must also emphasize general education curriculum and how the child will make progress in that area. The purpose here is to ensure that students with IEPs have the same curricular opportunities as their general education peers.

A. The IEP definition in the Code of Federal Regulation provides that the IEP must include the following

- (1) A statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including —
    - (i) How the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for non-disabled children)
- (CFR § 300.320(a)(1)(i))

#### Goals and Short Term Benchmarks/Objectives

The regulations enforce that the students with IEPs be involved in the general education curriculum. It is also imperative that goals and progress in the general education curriculum and other areas of need be observable and measurable. A traditionally used phrase such as, "Improve reading skill," is no longer acceptable as this improvement is not observable or measurable. In addition, this is the section that enforces the use of short-term objectives for students who take an alternate assessment like the CAPA. It is an IEP team decision to determine if short-term benchmarks/objectives may be beneficial for students who take the California Standards Test as well.

- (2)(i) A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to—

(A) Meet the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; and

(B) Meet each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability

(ii) For children with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives (34CFR§300.320(2)(i)(A)(i)(ii))

### Progress on Goals

The lack short-term benchmark/objectives for students who do not take an alternate assessment does not mean that continuous monitoring of progress is not necessary. The IEP must contain language that informs the parents of when progress will be reported and how it will be provided. Since goals are to be written to standards that are addressed in the general education curriculum, this progress monitoring should be occurring regularly and reported similarly to the general education students.

(3) A description of —

(i) How the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals described... will be measured; and

(ii) When periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards) will be provided (34CFR§300.320(3)(i)(ii))

### Program Supports and Modifications

The IEP must also contain a description of any related services as well as program supports and modifications that will support the progress of that child in the general education curriculum. This is a part of the IEP where specific tools, such as assistive technology is addressed and specific program modifications such as note-takers, open book tests, extra time for assignments can be addressed as well as any environmental program supports or modifications.

(4) A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services,... and a statement of the program modifications or support for school personnel that will be provided to enable the child —

(i) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;

(ii) To be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum

(34CFR§300.320(4)(i)(ii))

### Developing the IEP

The regulations enforce that in the development of the IEP, it is imperative to look at the students' area of strengths and weaknesses based on multi-disciplinary assessments, information from parents as well as from classroom observations. Only when this type of thorough examination of needs is completed, can the IEP be developed to meet the specific learning needs of the child.

- (a)(1) In developing each child's IEP, the IEP team must consider-
- (i) The strengths of the child;
  - (ii) The concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child
  - (iii) The results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the child; and
  - (iv) The academic, developmental, and functional needs of the child
- (34 CFR §300.324(a)(1)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))

### Special Factors

As IEP teams make IEP goal decisions, they must consider that other factors may affect the child's ability to reach those goals. Behavioral goals may be needed as well as academic goals. Behavioral goals and the use of behavioral interventions and supports provide further opportunities for students to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum. Linguistically appropriate goals must also be addressed for those students who have limited English proficiency. These students must have support and specific instruction in English Language Development in order to access and participate in the general curriculum. The consideration of appropriate assistive technology is integral to support the student in attaining the academic as well as functional goals prescribed.

- (2) Consideration of special factors. The IEP Team must –
- (i) ...consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior
  - (ii) in the case of a child with limited English proficiency, consider the language needs of the child as those needs relate to the child's IEP
  - (v) consider of whether the child needs assistive technology devices and services
- (34 CFR §300.324(a)(2)(i)(ii)(v))

### Review of IEP Goals

The regulations require that at a minimum the IEP would be reviewed at least annually. At this IEP review, the annuals goals must be assessed to determine if the goals are being met. At this review goals must be revised if there is a lack of progress toward the goal and a lack of progress in the general education curriculum. In the development of IEP goals it is important to consider the rate of learning as well as past and present educational performance over time when

determining the amount of time anticipated for the student to reach the goal.

Review of the child's IEP periodically, but not less than annually, to determine whether the annual goals for the child are being achieved; and

(iii) ...revise the IEP as appropriate to address-

(A) Any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals described in §300.320(a)(2), and in the general education curriculum if appropriate

34CFR § 300.324(6)(b)(i)(ii)

### **Components of IDEA'04 Compliant IEP Goals and Objectives/Benchmarks**

Well-written goals and objective/benchmarks, when appropriate, should communicate the same intended outcome to whoever reads it. A well-written performance goal and objective/benchmark answer six questions: who, does what, when, given what, how much (criteria/mastery), and how will it be measured.

**Who**—relates to the student

**Does what**— describes observable behavior that the student will do to complete the goal or objective/benchmark

**When**—relates to a specific point in time when something will have been learned or completed.

**Given what**—describes the conditions that will need to be in place for the goal or objective/benchmark to be completed.

**How much**

- Mastery – describes the performance accuracy of the behavior needed for the goal and objective/benchmark to be considered completed.
- Criteria – describes how many times the behavior must be observed for the goal or objective/benchmark to be considered completed.

**How will it be measured** – describes performance data

### **Example of Well-Written Goal and Benchmark/Objective**

When discussing and analyzing goals and objective/benchmarks, it is helpful to put the following labels on the six components:

• Who:	Student
• Does what:	Observable behavior
• When:	By reporting date
• Given what:	Conditions
• How much:	Mastery, criteria

• How will it be measured:	Performance data
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### Sample Goal for Second Grade

Reading Comprehension 2.2.4

Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text:

Ask clarifying questions about essential textual elements of expositions (e.g., why, what if, how).

When given a second grade level text on CD, “student” will read along and ask four clarifying questions related to the text read, using “why/what if/how” questions with 100 percent accuracy in three of five trials, as measured by teacher-charted records.

#### 1. Who – Student

- a. This is expressed either by a pronoun or a noun.
- b. This is the individual who has the responsibility of achieving the goal and whose performance will be observed for evaluation purposes.

**Example:** By March 30, 2007, when given a second grade level text on CD, Slater will read along and ask four clarifying questions related to the text read, using why/what if/how questions with 100 percent accuracy in three of five trials, as measured by teacher-charted records.

#### 2. Does What – Observable behavior

- a. This is the measurable and observable behavior that is proof of the performance that will be exhibited.
- b. It is expressed in action words (action verb).
  - Each standard uses verbs to describe a learner outcome.
  - In writing goals, it is important to use verbs that are open to few interpretations and that require an overt, observable action e.g., write, solve, compare, list, recite, define, construct, read, read orally, identify, orally decode, match, point to, orally produce, define, sort, make, verbally explain, substitute, orally blend, orally segment, ask, etc.).
- c. The observable behavior represents a state of doing, not a state of being, but an observable activity.
  - i. Correct:
    - Will read aloud
    - Will point to specific letters
  - ii. Incorrect:
    - Will be able to read aloud
    - Will know how to point to specific letters

**Note:** Never use *be able*, as this represents a state of being, a verb form which is not observable.

**Example:** By March 30, 2010, when given a second grade level text on CD, Slater will read along and ask four clarifying questions related to the text read, using why/what if/how questions with 100% accuracy in three of five

trials as measured by teacher-charted records.

**3. When – By reporting date**

- a. This is the timeline by which the goal should be completed.
- b. The actual day and year needs to be written, (e.g., by April 12, 2010).
- c. The dates should be aligned with an annual review that must be held prior to one year.
- d. For short-term benchmarks/objectives, the dates should align with regular reporting periods for general education students.

**Example:** By **March 30, 2010**, when given a second grade level text on CD, Slater will read along and ask four clarifying questions related to the text read, using why/what if/how questions with 100 percent accuracy in three of five trials as measured by teacher-charted records.

**4. Given what—Conditions**

State where, when, what tools or strategies provided as well as under what circumstances the observable behavior will occur.

- Given a graphic organizer, outline, or pre-writing activities ...
- Given a topic or specific passage ...
- Given student's rough draft ...
- Given the text on CD or tape...
- Given a writing organization software program...
- Given a calculator...
- Given a Franklin Speller...
- Given text to speech software...
- Given a keyboarding device...
- Given a computer with spell and grammar check...
- Given a modified keyboard...
- Given a communication device...
- Given a familiar object or experience ...
- Given \_\_\_\_\_ subject and predicates ...
- Given an opportunity to read orally....
- Given an adaptive pencil grip.....
- Given a voice output device...
- When hand is placed on switch ...
- With staff support at \_\_\_\_\_
- After hands are positioned \_\_\_\_\_
- Following staff motoring of \_\_\_\_\_
- In a small group setting, given a written prompt ...
- In a small group setting, given an auditory prompt ...
- In a small group setting, given a visual prompt ...
- In a classroom setting, given a written prompt ...
- In a classroom setting, given an auditory prompt ...

**Example:** By March 30, 2010, when given a second grade level text on CD,

Slater will read along and ask four clarifying questions related to the text read, using why/what if/how questions with 100% accuracy in three of five trials as measured by teacher-charted records.

**5. How much – Mastery, criteria**

**Criteria:** State the extent of achievement or standard of performance that is required of the student.

- ... within \_\_\_ minutes
- ... \_\_\_ out of \_\_\_ trials
- ... \_\_\_ times weekly
- ... for \_\_\_ percent of trials
- ... for \_\_\_ consecutive sessions
- ... by the end of \_\_\_ quarter or trimester
- ... with fewer than \_\_\_ errors per paragraph
- ...with an overall rubric score of \_\_\_

**Mastery:** State the level of achievement required of the student before proceeding to the next objective.

- ... \_\_\_ out of \_\_\_ trial days
- ... \_\_\_ consecutive trials
- ... \_\_\_ consecutive weeks
- ... \_\_\_ out of \_\_\_ trials

**Example:** By March 30, 2010, when given a second grade level text on CD, Slater will read along and ask four clarifying questions related to the text read, using why/what if/how questions **with 100% accuracy in three of five trials** as measured by teacher-charted records.

**6. How will it be measured – Performance data**

- a. Methods of measurement may include student work samples, various data collection strategies including curriculum based measures, data from regular progress monitoring, portfolios, teacher observations and informal data collection, school wide benchmark assessments as well as summative and formative assessments.

**Example:** By March 30, 2010, when given a second grade level text on CD, Slater will read along and ask four clarifying questions related to the text read, using why/what if/how questions with 100 percent accuracy in three of five trials **as measured by teacher-charted records.**

**Example**

<b>Who will perform:</b>	<b>Name of the student</b>
<b>Does what</b> (observable behavior):	recite compare

	define solve contrast write
<b>When</b> (by reporting date):	As specified at IEP meeting (Within one year of IEP meeting)
<b>Given what</b> (conditions):	Setting or conditions or tools provided that will be needed for the goal or objective/benchmark to be completed.
<b>How much</b> (mastery):	90 percent accuracy
<b>How much</b> (criteria):	Four out of five trials
<b>How</b> it will be measured:	Performance data

### Setting Goals

1. **Locate the student's present level of performance in the California content standards.** This should be accomplished by utilizing multiple measures including the California Standards Tests, CAPA scores, CELDT or other ELD assessment scores, school-wide screening measures, benchmark assessments, curriculum based measures as well as observational information. Information should also be obtained from parents and all other teachers or specialists that work with the child.
2. **Identify skills for further development.** Utilize the CST Blueprints to identify specific grade level standards to be addressed. State standards in the grades below may be addressed if the student needs further development of a prerequisite skill **in addition** to grade level standard goals.
3. **Consider rate of learning**
  - How much growth is needed to reach the grade level standards?
  - What conditions will be necessary to support the student reaching this goal?
  - What level of time and intensity of service will be needed to accelerate the student to meet this goal?
  - What program supports or modifications are needed for goal attainment?
4. **Write annual goal**
  - At the end of one year, what will the student accomplish with the program, supports and services provided in the IEP?
  - Align the student's specific needs with the appropriate grade level state content standards, and/or align to specific prerequisite skill area.
  - Ensure that the annual goal is measurable and observable.

**5. If the students takes an alternate assessment or the IEP team determines it is appropriate, develop the first and second objectives/benchmarks**

- These are the steps to meeting the annual goal.
- Must be measurable and observable.
- Determine due date; consider using general education reporting period deadlines.

**Remember:**

- All annual goals must be written in observable, measurable terms.
- If appropriate short-term benchmarks/objectives should be developed
- Parents must be notified at the IEP meeting when and how they will be updated on progress on the annual goal.

**Checklist for Goals**

	Yes	No
1. Are the goals clear and understandable?		
2. Are the goals stated in positive terms?		
3. Is there at least one goal for each area of need?		
4. Are the goals based upon the present levels of performance statements?		
5. Are the goals practical and relevant when the student's academic, social, and vocational needs are considered?		
6. Are the goals measurable?		
7. Do the goals describe what the student can reasonably be expected to accomplish within one year?		
8. Are the goals aligned with state standards?		
9. Are transition goals based on measurable post secondary goals?		

**Checklist for Short-Term Objectives/Benchmarks**

	Yes	No
1. Do the short-term objectives/benchmarks represent a task analysis of the annual goals?		
2. Does each objective/benchmark describe the observable behavior the learner is expected to do?		
3. Does each objective/benchmark specify the level of performance that will be accepted as successful achievement of the objective/benchmark?		
4. Does each objective/benchmark indicate the conditions under which you expect the performance to occur?		

5. Are the objectives/benchmarks measurable and in logical sequence?		
6. Are the objectives/benchmarks positive, specific and realistic?		
7. Have the general education standards been used as appropriate when developing the short-term objectives/benchmarks?		
8. Are the objectives/benchmarks aligned with state standards?		
9. Do the transition objective/benchmarks represent a coordinated set of activities that will support reaching the post secondary goal?		

### ***Writing Goals for Limited English Proficient Students***

“The major goals for English Learners (EL, also known as limited-English-proficient students) are to develop proficiency in English and in the district’s core curriculum as rapidly and as effectively as possible in an established English-language classroom or in an alternative course of study (i.e., alternative program) with curriculum designed for such students.” (CCR Training Guide 2003-2004)

When writing goals for students who are English Language Learners receiving special education services, the IEP team must consider the student’s status in:

- ❖ English Language Development and
- ❖ Meaningful participation in the district’s curriculum.

Linguistically and culturally appropriate IEP goals, objectives and related services should reflect the current language needs of the English learner in determining the appropriate:

- ❖ English language development methodology,
- ❖ Access to the core curriculum, and
- ❖ Instructional setting.

In developing the IEP for these students, it is particularly important that the IEP team consider how the child’s level of English proficiency affects the special education and related services that the child needs in order to receive Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Under state and federal law including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, school districts are required to provide children who are learning English with language services even when they are receiving special education services:

- a) To enable them to acquire proficiency in English, and
- b) To provide them with meaningful access to the content of the educational curriculum available to all students, including special education and related services (Erikson,J., 2006).

### **Linguistically Appropriate Goals and Short-Term Benchmarks/Objectives**

Goals and objectives that are set for English Language learners contain features that reflect the students' proficiency in their native language and in the English language. Since comprehensible input is foremost for the success of the learner, the goal and objective should state in what language the goal and objective would be accomplished. Linguistically appropriate goals and objectives are set in the areas of English Language Development, core curriculum in the curriculum areas of need, and in behavior, if needed (Erikson, J., 2006)

### *English Language Development Goals*

Each special education student who is an English Learner must receive English Language Development as part of the daily instruction. ELD is designed to teach English learners to:

- ❖ listen/understand,
- ❖ speak,
- ❖ read and
- ❖ write English and
- ❖ acquire the linguistic competencies that native English speakers already possess when they enter school and continue developing throughout life.

The linguistically appropriate goals and objectives:

- ❖ are measurable
- ❖ correlate directly with present levels as measured by the CELDT (or an alternative test for students unable to take the CELDT)
- ❖ are specific
- ❖ are developed for each linguistic area of need
- ❖ consider student strengths, performance levels, preferences, and learning styles.

There are specific reference documents to use in setting goals and objectives in ELD. The California State Department of Education has implemented English Language Development Standards to assist teachers to select appropriate goals and develop benchmarks. These standards are written by grade spans:

- ❖ Kindergarten-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade
- ❖ 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ❖ 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ❖ 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade

ELD standards are entry standards into the English Language Arts Standards. The ELD standards mirror the State Standards for English Language Arts by following the same grade spans and covering the following areas:

- ❖ Listening and Speaking
- ❖ Reading Word Analysis
- ❖ Reading Fluency and Systemic Vocabulary Development
- ❖ Reading Comprehension
- ❖ Writing Strategies and Applications
- ❖ Writing Conventions

- ❖ Literacy Response and Analysis  
(Erikson, J., 2006)

### **Goal Development**

Prior to the development of goals, the IEP team consults the ELD standards or A Map for Developing Assessment and Instruction in English Language Arts and English Language Development. The team then finds the relevant grade level for entry into the standards. The teacher chooses the appropriate standards in the area/s of listening/understanding, speaking, reading, and writing at the student's proficiency level in all areas where the student is not fully English-proficient. Finally, the teacher develops goals to meet the standard/s.

### **Sample Goals and Objectives:**

#### **Standard Area: Listening K-2**

*Standard:* The student listens and responds critically to oral communication in English.

**Goal:** By March 30, 2010, given a sequence of information on familiar topics presented orally in English, the Jorge will demonstrate comprehension at a second grade level by sequentially arranging descriptive pictures in 9 out of 10 trials as measured by teacher observation.

**Objective 1:** By June 17, 2009, given oral directions in English on a familiar topic, Jorge will point to the picture describing the topic in 4 out of 5 trials.

**Objective 2:** By November 28, 2009, given oral directions in English on a familiar topic, Jorge will sequence 3 pictures depicting the topic in 4 out of 5 trials.

The ELD Standards can be found at the California Department of Education website at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/> Special Education teachers may also consult A Map for Developing Assessment and Instruction in English Language Arts and English Language Development published by WestEd. This resource is laid out to show ELD and ELA standards on the same page by grade level and by area e.g., K-2: listening and speaking. Proficiency levels further define the areas in the Standards: beginning, early intermediate, intermediate, early advanced and advanced. (Erikson, J., 2006)

### **Writing Goals for Students who take Alternate Assessments**

#### **California Alternate Performance Assessment –CAPA**

The No Child Left Behind Act allows states to develop an assessment based on alternate achievement standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The California Alternate Performance Assessment was developed to assess these students who cannot participate in the California Standards Test even with accommodations and modifications. The CAPA links directly to the California academic content standards.

Currently, the CAPA assesses student achievement of a subset of the kindergarten through grade two content standards and is based on the designated core curriculum for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

The Level I CAPA is designed to assess students enrolled in any grade level from 2 through 11. These students are the most significantly cognitively disabled students, with cognitive ability ranging from 0 – 24 months. Because the Level I CAPA is for the most significantly cognitively disabled students, the alternate standards are linked to the Kindergarten to grade two content standards. Assessments are available in English-language arts, mathematics, and science.

The Level II CAPA is designed to assess students enrolled in grades two and three, and is available in English-language arts and mathematics.

The Level III CAPA is designed to assess students enrolled in grades four and five, and is available in English-language arts, mathematics, and science.

The Level IV CAPA is designed to assess students enrolled in grades six, seven, and eight in English-language arts, mathematics, and science.

The Level V CAPA is designed to assess students enrolled in grades 9 – 11 in English-language arts, mathematics, and science.

Since assessments based on alternate achievement standards may cover a narrower range of content than assessments based on grade-level achievement standards, only those standards, which are deemed meaningful to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, are included in the CAPA Standards Blueprint. These Blueprints are intended to promote access to the general curriculum, yet reflect the highest achievement standards possible for the population of students who are eligible to take the CAPA. Accessing these Blueprints is essential to writing standards aligned goals and short-term benchmarks/objectives for students who take the CAPA. The CAPA blueprints can be obtained at the CDE site at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/capablueprints.asp>

### Present Levels of Performance

IEP teams determine, based on a multi-disciplinary assessment, if a student is eligible to take the CAPA. Most teams use the checks sheet provided in section three to determine if the CAPA is an appropriate assessment for the student. Based upon the team decision, determining that the student will take an alternate assessment leads the team to write goals based on alternate achievement standards. CAPA levels are determined based upon this multi-disciplinary assessment and the student's grade level.

Once the CAPA level is established, as well as the area of need is identified, the team would follow the same process as previously mentioned for writing standards aligned goals. In addition to goals, students who take an alternate assessment aligned to alternate achievement standards must also have short-term benchmarks/objectives provided in the IEP.

### Example of Standards Aligned Goal and Benchmark/Objectives

ELA K-1.2

1.0 Listening and Speaking Strategies: Students listen and respond to oral communication. They speak in clear and coherent sentences.

1.2 Comprehension: Share information and ideas, speaking audibly in complete, coherent sentences:

Blueprint Item: Communicate choice using gesture, action, voice output device or vocalization

**Goal:** By March 30, 2010, when given a voice output device and a verbal ‘yes or no prompt,’ Kayla will respond by using a voice output device to communicate her choice in eight out of ten trials as measured by teacher-charted records.

**Objective 1:** By June 17, 2009, when given a voice output device and a verbal “yes or no prompt”, Kayla will respond by using a voice output device to communicate her choice in 4 out of ten trials as measured by teacher-charted records.

**Objective 2:** By November 28, 2009 when given a voice output device and a verbal “yes or no prompt”, Kayla will respond by using a voice output device to communicate her choice in 6 out of ten trials as measured by teacher-charted records.

### EL Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Students, who cannot access the CELDT assessment due to severe cognitive disabilities, can use an Alternative Assessment, such as the Alternative Language Proficiency Instrument for Severely Disabled Students (ALPI) to determine the student’s proficiency levels in English for receptive and expressive language. If the student is an EL the CAPA Blueprints should be referenced in setting goals and objectives.

**Standard:** ELA K-1.1

2.0 Listening and Speaking Strategies: Students listen and respond to oral communication. They speak in clear and coherent sentences.

1.1 Understand and follow one and two-step oral directions

CAPA Blueprint Item: Orient in direction of speaker

**Goal:** By March 30, 2010, when given a verbal direction in English, “ Look at me” by the teacher, Osana will orient in the direction of the speaker in 3 out of 4 trials as measured by teacher observation.

**Objective 1:** By June 17, 2009, when given a verbal direction in English, “Look at me”, by the teacher, Osana will orient in the direction of the speaker 1 out of 4 trials.

**Objective 2:** By November 28, 2009, when given a verbal direction in English, “Look at me”, by the teacher, Osana will orient in the direction of the speaker 2 out of 4 trials.  
(Erikson, J., 2006)

### Writing Goals Students for Students who will Take the California Modified Assessment

California is currently developing an alternate assessment based on grade level standards to meet the needs of those students who are not likely to reach grade level achievement in the same time frame as students without disabilities, but can make progress toward grade level achievement. There will be no limitation on how many students may participate, but only up to 2% can be counted as proficient or above for the purposes of calculating AYP. The California Modified Achievement test will be aligned with the California Content Standards and will not preclude students from earning a regular high school diploma.

The assessment will provide access to grade-level curriculum for the grade in which the student is enrolled, and be aligned with the State’s academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled. The significant difference in this assessment is the access that is allowed through varying test formats and the inclusion of built in accommodations into the construct of the assessment. The specific strategies used to access the CMA are the same strategies or scaffolds that should be used in instruction.

Since the CMA is not aligned to alternate achievement standards, short-term benchmarks/objectives must not be written for students who will take the CMA. It is up to the IEP team’s discretion to determine if the student would benefit from the inclusion of short-term benchmarks/objectives in the IEP and can add them if they deem them necessary.

The process for writing grade level standard goals for students who take the CMA is the same as for other students who do not take an alternate assessment aligned to alternate achievement standards. The CMA does have its own set of Blueprints developed specifically for this population based on grade level content standards. These Blueprints can be accessed at the CDE website at :  
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr07/documents/mar07item7.doc>

### Conclusion

Writing standards aligned goals for any child receiving special education services is possible. Well written IEP goals provide a road map for students through the standards maze allowing all students access required by IDEA’04, “...to make

progress in the general education curriculum.” Standards aligned goals provide the first critical step to ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to learn, and access the general education core. It behooves us to follow the law, not simply to be compliant, but to ultimately improve the academic and functional outcomes for **all** students with disabilities.

DRAFT

## Lesson 6 Review- Writing Measurable Annual Goals and Objectives/Benchmarks Related to California Content Standards

1. In developing the IEP, the IEP team must consider—

- (i) \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) \_\_\_\_\_

Answer: a)(1) In developing each child's IEP, the IEP team must consider-

- (iv) The strengths of the child;
- (v) The concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child
- (vi) The results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the child; and
- (vii) The academic, developmental, and functional needs of the child

2. Each IDEA '04 Complaint goal must contain the following components:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

- Who
- Does what
- When
- Given what
- How much
- How will it be measured

3. "Does what" must be written in observable and measurable language. List three verbs that would be appropriate for writing an IEP compliant goal that is observable and measurable.

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Answers could include: write, solve, compare, list recite, define, construct, identify, decode, match, sort, verbally explain, etc.

4. "How" is performance data. Give some examples of how an IEP goal may be

measured.

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Answers could include: student work samples, curriculum based measures, benchmark assessments, data from regular progress monitoring, teacher observations, teacher charted records, etc.

5. When setting goals IEP teams should consider these five steps:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

When setting goals IEP teams should consider these five steps:

- Locate the student's present level of performance in the California content standards
- Identify skills for further development
- Consider rate of learning
- Write annual goal
- If the student takes the CAPA, determine appropriate short-term benchmark/objectives

6. Linguistically appropriate goals and objectives are:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer: Linguistically appropriate goals and objectives:

- are measurable
- correlate directly with present levels as measured by the CELDT (or an alternative test for students unable to take the CELDT)
- are specific
- are developed for each linguistic area of need
- consider student strengths, performance levels, preferences, and learning styles.

7. The ELD standards mirror the State Standards for English Language Arts and cover the following areas:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Answer:

- Listening and Speaking
- Reading Word Analysis
- Reading Fluency and Systemic Vocabulary Development
- Reading Comprehension
- Writing Strategies and Applications
- Writing Conventions
- Literacy Response and Analysis

8. Currently the CAPA assesses student achievement of a subset of \_\_\_\_\_ through grade \_\_\_\_\_ content standards.

Answer:

Currently the CAPA assesses student achievement of a subset of kindergarten through grade two content standards.

9. The California Modified Achievement test will be aligned with the California Content Standards and will not preclude students from earning a \_\_\_\_\_.

Answer:

The California Modified Achievement test will be aligned with the California Content Standards and will not preclude students from earning a regular high school diploma.